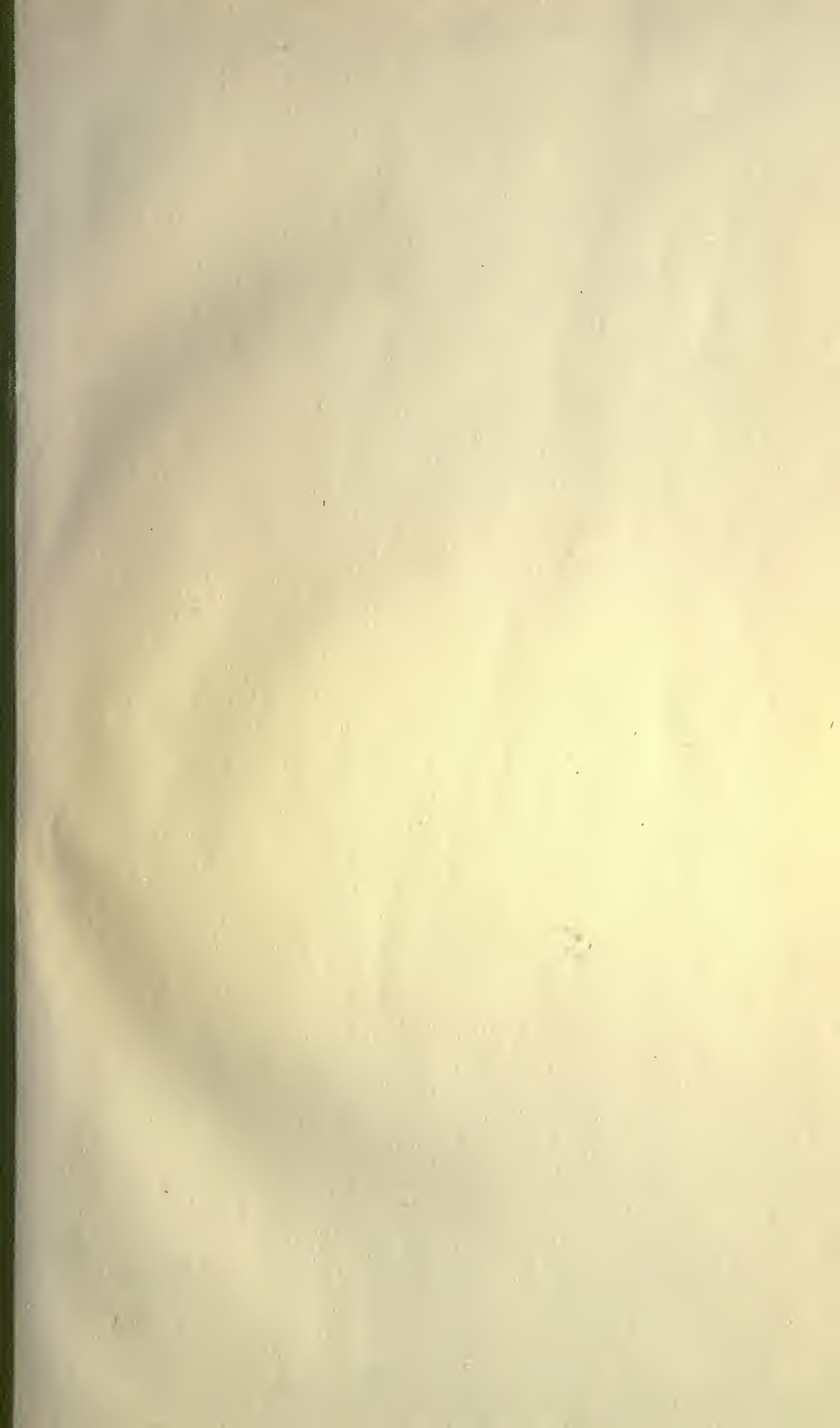


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## BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

FOR THE PUBLICATION OF ITS COLLECTIONS.

---

THE undersigned propose to publish, by subscription, a selection from the historical documents and papers communicated to, or read before, the Buffalo Historical Society, since its organization in 1862.

They will be arranged, revised and edited under the direction of the Publication Committee of the Society.

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THE undersigned, Committee on Publications of the Buffalo Historical Society, would cordially recommend to its members and patrons, and the citizens of Buffalo generally, the proposition of Messrs. Bigelow Brothers, as contained in the foregoing prospectus.

The Society has in its archives a large number of original manuscripts of general and local interest, the publication of which has been omitted for want of funds.

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It is hoped that all of the members and others interested, will respond to the circular by a liberal subscription.

O. H. MARSHALL, }  
E. S. HAWLEY, } *Publication Committee.*  
A. T. CHESTER, }

Buffalo, February 24, 1879.

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This volume is published according to the above Prospectus, under the editorial supervision of Rev. Albert Bigelow, Corresponding Secretary and Librarian.



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BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
1879.

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

---

To promote the completeness of this volume, the editor has marked the following points for notice, by way of preface.

1. As will be obvious to all, this is, mainly, a volume *about Buffalo*; and suitably, as an initial volume, considering the object and name of the Society whose "Publications" it contains. Yet, The Voyage of the Griffon and Major Norris' Journal indicate the wider range which the papers in the Society's archives, and those to be communicated, assume.

2. The *Index*, upon which great labor and care have been expended, has been prepared less as a help towards finding prominent topics, than as a guide to, and reminder of, even the most slightly mentioned ones. Some may think it needlessly minute. But a good authority has said, "An index cannot be too full or particular;" and even to err is better in this direction than in the other. This one is intended not only to answer questions, but to start them; to provoke inquiry, and stimulate investigation; and thus even the obscurest name may become useful and valuable, as well as interesting. It is hoped that this index of nearly sixteen hundred titles may be found to serve this purpose well. Instances of omission are, however, observable. A few are inadvertent; the greater number intentional, and will be found in the remarkable "proclamation" of

Major Noah, pp. 315 to 322. Let it not be thought strange, however, if before such an array of names, encircling the whole world, even editorial patience and perseverance quailed.

3. By way of *corrections*, the following may be noted: Colonel Bird mentioned on page 32 is by mistake indexed as Colonel Wm. A. Bird. The two belong to quite different periods of time. A competent investigator also finds the first Roman Catholic minister in Buffalo to have been, not Father Pax, as stated by Dr. Lord from his recollection (page 125), but a Father Maertz. Nothing further in the statement concerning Father Pax requires change or abatement. The Rev. Mr. Squires mentioned at page 383 is in fact the Rev. Miles P. Squier described at page 124; at page 177 the name of Mrs. Sidway should be "Parnell," instead of "Pamelia;" at page 180 that of Mr. Lee should be R. "Hargreave," instead of "Hargrave;" and at page 281 "Bois Black" should read "Bois Blanc." These will be found correctly indexed.

In the later numbers, as issued from month to month, the dates of death of deceased writers, were given in notes. Those whose papers were printed before this was done, were Hon. Millard Fillmore, who died March 8, 1875; William Ketchum, who died October 1, 1876; and Rev. John C. Lord, D. D., who died January 21, 1877.

4. Items of *addition* are the following: Concerning the relic of Farmer's Brother's coffin, mentioned at page 52 as a tablet, and stated to have been lost, it is gratifying to report, that since that page was printed the article has been discovered, and is now safely in its right place in the Society's Cabinet.



The original manuscript of the Ballad of the Three Thayers, page 122, is in the possession of a lady of this city, and will doubtless eventually find its home in the Society's Cabinet.

In a very full list of Journals of Sullivan's Expedition, just received from General John S. Clark of Auburn, N. Y., who has copies already of twenty-three, are found one by the Lieutenant-Colonel Dearborn mentioned pp. 221, 224 and 246, and one by Captain Benjamin Lodge, mentioned at page 234 as Mr. Lodge. Concerning the latter, it is stated that he "was in charge of a party that accompanied the army from Easton, and with compass and chain surveyed the entire route to the Genesee river. On the return march, commencing at Kanadaseaga, the party accompanied Colonel Butler, and made a like survey along the east side of Cayuga lake, connecting with the main line, near the present Horseheads. But one section of the map has been found, and that was among the papers of Captain Machin, an artillery officer. The original is now in the hands of J. R. Symms [Simins], Esq., Fort Plain, N. Y. Several parties have photographic copies. This section extends north of Tioga point, and west as far as Kanadaseaga."

In a note to an account of a Journal by Lieutenant and Captain Charles Nukerck, General Clark mentions a "*drawing* of the Order of March" of Sullivan's Army (referred to in this volume, page 218, note), and states that it was at one time contained in Nukerck's Journal, but is now missing; having been, probably, on a final leaf, which has disappeared from an "otherwise perfect work."

With the hope that this volume will be read with pleasure equal to that enjoyed in its preparation, and that it will tend to keep alive, increase and intensify the historic spirit, on the part of our citizens, and of all readers, it is now submitted to its patrons, and the public.

A. B.

xxviii 1





Engraved by J. C. PHILLIPS

*Millard Fillmore*

PETER PAUL & BRO. STATIONERS & STEEL & COPPER PLATE PRINTERS, BUFFALO, N.Y.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
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DELIVERED AT AMERICAN HALL, JULY 1, 1862.

---

GENTLEMEN OF THE BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY :

WHEN men erect a statue to commemorate the virtues of some distinguished civilian, or the heroism and gallantry of some great warrior, they inaugurate it with all due ceremony; and so a newly elected President, before he enters upon his term of office, is usually inaugurated with great pomp and ceremony; and he generally indicates in an address the policy which he intends to pursue in administering the government.

We cannot think of comparing this infant Society, which has yet to win its fame, with such august events. Nevertheless, the "BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY" having been organized, it seems fit and proper that it should be inaugurated; and we have met this evening for that purpose.

But the question is generally asked, why establish an Historical Society in Buffalo? We all know its history and that of the surrounding country. The town itself—as village and city—is scarcely older than its oldest inhabitant, and the whole of Western New York has been settled within the memory of men now living; and we can, therefore, learn its history by



talking with our neighbors. Such persons may say, that we do not require historical records to tell us all that we desire to know of the city and its inhabitants.

I grant that this may be true of some of this generation, but certainly not of all. Even now the inquisitive mind wishes to know a thousand things connected with the origin and expansion of this great city, and the labors of its enterprising inhabitants, of which he can find no authentic record. But even if all its present inhabitants knew, by tradition or actual observation, everything connected with the commencement and growth of this city, and the men who have acted a distinguished part on its theatre, still this historical association would be necessary. It must be borne in mind, that its labors are not for the present generation merely, or chiefly, but rather for posterity.

“The object of this Society,” as expressed in its Constitution, “is to discover, procure and preserve whatever may relate to the history of Western New York, in general, and the city of Buffalo in particular.” It is, therefore, apparent that the object of this Society is not the study of history, either ancient or modern, general or local, or the formation of a library for that purpose; but its chief object is to collect and preserve the materials of history relating to Western New York, and especially to Buffalo, for future reference and use. Those who would learn the history of nations which have arisen, flourished and passed away, leaving nothing but a name, and the records and monuments of their works, to tell that they ever existed, and those who would trace the origin and history of the nations among which the earth is now divided, must seek that information from other sources than this Society. Its object is not to teach, but to preserve history. And it is certainly a grateful task to commemorate the virtues of those who have built up this city and its noble institutions, and to be sure that their names shall not be forgotten. Now is the time to photograph their characters in all the lineaments of active life, that the generations who shall come after us may see them as



we have seen them, and be stimulated to emulate their virtues, and if possible rival their enterprise.

The history of a city like this, naturally divides itself into two parts—material and personal; and the combination of these in due proportion constitutes its history. The material is first and most enduring; but the personal, which sketches individual life, and social, religious, charitable and political combinations, is much the most interesting; though the actors, like those in the theatre, appear upon the stage but to perform the part assigned them by Providence in the great drama of life, and then pass from our view forever; but their works, material and moral, remain to bless or curse mankind, as they have been good or evil.

I am sure it cannot be that any of us know all of Buffalo which we ought; and if we neglect our duty, posterity will know much less than we do. BUFFALO! Is it not a strange name for a city? To our ears it is familiar, indicating only the name of a pleasant and beautiful city. But a foreigner, when you say you are from Buffalo, looks at you as though he thought the inhabitants of the place where you reside were buffalos, and you unavoidably feel that you would be glad to give some reason why this singular name has been attached to your place of residence. But who among us can tell? I am sure I cannot. I do not mean to say that it is difficult to ascertain how the city came by this name, for it is manifest that it took its name from the creek. But the question is, why was this stream that runs through our city called "Buffalo creek," and when and by whom was it thus christened? To this question I confess that I have never seen any satisfactory answer. I have never seen any reliable statement that the buffalo in his wild state was ever found in Western New York. I believe that his native haunt was the great prairies of the West, and nowhere else on this Continent. It is true that early French travelers have spoken of seeing "wild cows," especially in the northern part of the state; but it is evident to my mind from their de-

scription, when they give any, that they meant either the moose or the elk. It is clear, then, that this name could not have arisen from the fact that this locality was once the haunt of the wild buffalo.

About 1845, the question of the origin of this name for the creek was considerably discussed in the papers of this city. It seemed to be conceded by all those who professed to understand the Indian language, that it was not a translation of any Indian name for the creek; for, so far as appears, they had none, but called the place at or near the mouth of the creek, "Tush-ua" or "Dush-ua," which all agree meant the place of the "peeled bass-woods;" so that we cannot trace this name to an aboriginal origin.

The first historians after the dark or middle ages, had apparently no difficulty in accounting for the origin of nations and cities and their names. For we are informed by an historian (Buckle's "History of Civilization," vol. i, pp. 224-5) of great research, that "it was believed by every people that they were directly descended from ancestors who had been present at the siege of Troy. That was a proposition which no one thought of doubting. The only question was as to the details of such lineage. On this, however, there was a certain unanimity of opinion; since, not to mention inferior countries, it was admitted the French were descended from Francus, whom everybody knew to be the son of Hector; and it was also known that the Britons came from Brutus, whose father was no other than Æneas himself. They say that the capital of France was called after Paris, the son of Priam, because he fled there when Troy was overthrown; and that the city of Troyes was actually built by the Trojans, as the etymology of its name clearly proves."

Could I yield my convictions to fables like these, I might give credence to the story told in a paper called the *Pilot*, printed in this city, July 16th, 1845, in which an anonymous writer, signing himself O-GE-MA, tells a fanciful story about



some unknown and unnamed missionaries who camped near the mouth of the creek in a state of starvation, and sent out their hunters for game, who killed a horse belonging to the Indians, and served it up to the famishing missionaries as buffalo meat, and hence they called the stream "Buffalo creek." But I confess that this story, like those of the historians of France and England, appears too mythical to deserve any serious attention at the hands of the historian, and I fear that I am destined to pass down to the grave, without seeing the mystery explained of the origin of the name of "Buffalo creek," or when, or where, or by whom it was first applied to this stream.

But, having made this frank confession of my ignorance and despair, I trust that I shall be pardoned in offering a conjecture as to the probable origin of this name. I have searched the Indian treaties, and the public documents published by Congress and the State Legislature, and such books and maps as I have been able to find, and as far as my research extends, the name of "Buffalo creek" is first found in the first treaty made by the United States with the Six Nations of Indians who were the owners and occupants of Western New York. This treaty was made at Fort Stanwix (now Rome), on October 22d, 1784, immediately after the close of the Revolutionary war, at which time the whole country west of Utica was one unbroken wilderness. The military posts of Oswego, Niagara, Detroit and Mackinaw, were then, and for more than ten years afterwards, in the occupation of the British troops. Little or nothing was known of this particular locality. The course of trade with the Indians, was along the shore of Lake Ontario, and up Niagara river, and thence through Lake Erie, generally along the north shore, as being the shortest route to Detroit, and so on west; and, consequently, the traders had little or no inducement (as the military post at the upper end of Niagara river was at Fort Erie) to stop here; and if the creek had an Indian name it has not come down to us as distinct from the place of "peeled bass-woods." Who acted as scribe or inter-



preter at the council which formed that treaty, we know not, as all the minutes of its proceedings have been lost, and nothing but the treaty itself remains to explain what was done.

The chief object of the treaty seems to have been to fix the western boundary of the lands belonging to the Six Nations, and this place was made a point from which a line was to be run due south to the north line of Pennsylvania, as the western boundary of the Six Nations, and this locality was described in the treaty as "*Tehosororan* or *Buffaloe Creek*." Now it is apparent that "*Tehosororan*" was intended to be what the Indians here call "*Tushuway* or *Desoway*," and the marked difference of spelling shows the bungling manner in which the interpreter spoke the Indian language, or the stupidity of the scribe in writing it down. This mistake in the Indian name may also prepare us to look out for a mistake in the English name, for it can hardly be supposed that an Indian interpreter spoke English better than Indian, and it therefore might naturally happen that a stupid scribe did not readily distinguish between the word "beaver" and "buffalo," especially when spoken by one who could not speak the English language plainly. I strongly suspect that the interpreter meant to say *Beaver* creek, but not speaking the language well, the scribe understood him "*Buffalo* creek," and so wrote it down, and inserted it in the treaty. But you naturally ask why I suspect this mistake. I will tell you why. It does not appear that there was ever a buffalo here, and therefore there was nothing to suggest that name for the creek. The Indians never spoke of buffalos, as I can find, in all their communications to the colonial authorities of New York, but they seemed to be most anxious about their "*beaver hunting grounds*." They had no Buffalo tribe, but they had a Beaver tribe, and it is far more probable that beavers were found on this creek than buffalos.

This suspicion is very much strengthened, if not confirmed, by the fact that Corn Planter, a very intelligent Indian chief, who was present at Fort Stanwix when this treaty was made,

six years afterwards, in 1790, appealed to President Washington for relief on behalf of the Indians, and, in speaking of this treaty, he said: "You told us that the line drawn from Pennsylvania to Lake Ontario would mark it forever on the east, and that the line running from *Beaver* creek would mark it on the west, and we see that it is not so." (I. American State Papers, Indian Affairs, p. 207.)

Thus, I say, it seems probable that the same blundering stupidity which converted *Tushua* into *Tehosororan*, changed *Beaver* into *Buffalo*, and that this was the time, place and manner in which this stream received the name of "Buffalo creek."

But the question may be asked: "Why, if this mistake was made, was it not corrected?" How could it be? The Indians were too ignorant of letters to know that any mistake had been made, as is evident from the fact that Corn Planter called it *Beaver* creek six years afterwards, and the ignorance of the whites as to the true name precluded all possibility of correcting the mistake at that time; and the natural course of events soon fixed it beyond the power of correction, for the treaty was published as a law, and sent all over the country; but Corn Planter's address to President Washington was probably not published till forty years afterwards. Thus you will perceive, if my conjecture be correct, that Fort Stanwix was the place, and the making of the treaty of 1784, the occasion, for christening Buffalo creek, whether the god-fathers who assisted on that occasion, mistook the intended name or not. There the name originated, and there it was first applied. But I concede that this is only a conjecture; and the most that I can hope is, that it will stimulate some member of the Society, fond of antiquarian research, to pursue this investigation, and, if possible, either confirm or explode this theory, and settle the true origin of the name of Buffalo upon a firm, historical basis.

But I beg of you, gentlemen, not to infer from anything which I have said that I do not like the name of Buffalo. However it may sound to foreign ears, to me it signifies everything



which I love and admire in a city, beautiful, clean, healthy, warm in winter and cool in summer; but, above all, it is my home, and the home of the friends I love best, where my days have been spent, and my bones shall repose.

It is, probably, known to most of you, that three attempts have been made to fasten the name of Amsterdam upon some locality in this state. The first was the city of New York, which was called New Amsterdam; and it retained this name till the jurisdiction passed from Holland to Great Britain in 1664, when it was changed to New York. The second was Amsterdam, as the name of a township in Montgomery county, in 1793, which name it still retains, as also does the principal village of the town, formerly called Veedersburgh. The third and last effort was made here. When the original plot for this city was surveyed, about 1801 to 1803, the agents of the Holland Land Company, the proprietors of all this region of country, named this place, on their maps, "New Amsterdam," in compliment to the Dutch owners. But it is quite apparent, that this did not suit the first settlers here. The name of "Buffalo Creek" had then become well established. Congress, in 1805, established a collection district here by that name; and I have seen a letter from Joseph Ellicott, the Holland Land Company's local agent, dated August 24th, 1807, in which, speaking of the lots of this village, he calls it "New Amsterdam, *alias* Buffalo." Thus was the name, probably by some public act of the inhabitants themselves, transferred from the creek to the village, and, probably, about this time it became the popular name of the place. But the first legal recognition which I find of it, is in the law of the State Legislature, establishing the county of Niagara, passed March 11th, 1808, in which "Buffalo or New Amsterdam" is named as the county seat, on condition that the Holland Land Company would give land for the public buildings, and erect the same, which they did.

In 1810, the town of Buffalo was established, and in 1813, the village of Buffalo was incorporated; but it was burned the



same year, and was not re-organized till 1815. A new charter was obtained in 1822, and it was finally incorporated as a city in 1832, since which time the charter has been frequently amended so as to include more territory; swallowing up in its voracious growth the surrounding villages, including its old and once-formidable rival, Black Rock.

Thus much for the extraordinary name of our city. But even in this we are not wholly without precedent. Classical history gives us the name of *Bosporus*, meaning an *ox-passage*, for the narrow strait which separates Asia from Europe; *Oxford*, meaning a *ford for oxen*, is the name of one of the great collegiate cities of England; and *Berne*, the capital of Switzerland, means *bear*, and two or three of these uncouth animals are constantly kept there at the public expense as mementos. When I saw them, they were in a deep vault or excavation, which was surrounded by a wall, open at the top, and these singular pets were amusing themselves by climbing a pole in the centre, and catching fruit thrown to them by the spectators. I trust that we shall not imitate the Bernese example, by keeping two or three wild buffalos, for they would be exceedingly inconvenient where all animals are permitted to run at large.\*

But, dismissing this subject, let us turn for a moment to the original plan of our city, and see how far the design has been carried out. By looking at an original map you will perceive that a certain portion of the ground was laid out in small lots, called "inner lots," numbering in all upwards of two hundred; and outside of these inner lots, larger lots were laid out, called "outer lots," to the number of about one hundred and fifty. The inner lots were bounded on the north by Chippewa street; on the south-west by the Terrace; on the east by Ellicott street; and were evidently intended to be occupied by the dwellings, stores and shops of the citizens; while the outer lots were intended as pasture-ground for their cattle. But how strangely

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\* The nuisance here and below so earnestly referred to, has long been abated; and whatever disorder and uncleanness may be found in passing through our streets cannot now be charged upon animals roaming at large.—ED.

all this has been reversed. We now see the cattle and swine, which from their numbers apparently came from the surrounding country, daily feeding upon or rooting up the beautiful grass plots about our houses in the very heart of the city, which we have taken so much pains to make an attractive ornament to the town. How our Common Council have been able to legislate so much with a view of remedying this crying evil, without apparently producing the least effect, will form an interesting chapter in the future history of the "mysteries" of this city. I hope, for the honor of our city fathers and its police, as well as for the instruction of posterity, that some Diedrich Knickerbocker will give it to the world in all its grotesque significance.

But there is another thing connected with the original plan of our city, that may not be familiar to all. How many lawyers in the city, if shown a deed, bounding land on *Busti* and *Vollenhoven's* avenues, could tell where to locate it? We are a people fond of novelty, and where we cannot change the *thing*, we change the *name*. This propensity has been singularly exemplified during the present civil war. Ships and forts have changed their names so often, that, to a stranger, the history of the war must be a perfect "comedy of errors." We must not therefore be surprised to find that the early settlers in Buffalo, after getting rid of the name of New Amsterdam for their village, proceeded to demolish the jaw-breaking names of the streets, and to substitute more euphonious ones in their places. Hence they called *N. and S. Onondaga*, Washington street; *N. and S. Oneida*, Ellicott street; *Van Staphorst* and *Willink* avenues, Main street; *N. and S. Cayuga*, Pearl street; *Tuscarora*, Franklin street; *Messisagua*, Morgan street; *Schimelpenninck* avenue, Niagara street; *Stadnitski* avenue, Church street; *Vollenhoven's* avenue, Erie street; *Cazenovia* avenue, Court street; and *Busti* avenue, Genesee street. But I am bound to say that I regard these as beneficial changes, though the knowledge of the original names should be preserved to illustrate public rec-



ords and past history. One change, however, was made, for which there was no necessity, and which I cannot but regret, viz: that of *Crow* street to Exchange. Possibly our city fathers supposed this street had been named after that cunning but troublesome bird whose name it bears; but this, I am assured, is not so, since the street was named after John Crow, one of the earliest settlers, who resided on that street, and it is due to his memory that it should have retained his name.

I shall mention but one other feature in the original plan of this city, and that is, as you will see by the map, the large lot No. 104, occupying the whole space on the east side of Main street, between Eagle and Swan streets, and running back two-thirds of a mile, containing one hundred acres, and bounding on Main street with a semi-circle in front of the Churches.

This boundary would have carried Main street around this semi-circle, and would thus have enabled the owner to erect a palace on this semi-circle, from the observatory of which he could look up and down Main street, down Erie and Church streets to the lake, and down Niagara street to Black Rock and Canada. It is said that this magnificent lot was laid out by Joseph Ellicott for his own use. It was certainly a noble conception, and I cannot but regret that he was not permitted to carry it out, for the life of a man is nothing in comparison to the life of a city, and he would soon have passed away, leaving a splendid building for the display of the fine arts, and a beautiful park in the midst of our city. But the democratic spirit, of the time, which looked not to the future, was naturally jealous of such a baronial establishment, and cut the beautiful semi-circle by running Main street through it instead of around it. Mr. Ellicott, feeling the indignity, gave up the project, and never made Buffalo his residence; and this lot was finally *divided* by North and South *Division* streets, and surveyed into small lots, and sold out to settlers. Thus the last hope for an extensive park in the midst of our city vanished.



But, turning from the material history of Buffalo, on which I have said more than I intended, let us for a moment glance at its personal history; and here time admonishes me that I must be brief.

This naturally begins with the red man of the forest. Tradition says that a nation called "Neuter" once inhabited this region, occupying a space between the Senecas on the east, and the Eries or Cat Indians on the west; but which, like the Eries, was either driven off or exterminated by its more warlike and powerful neighbors. All that we know of the Neuter Nation is, perhaps, too vague and shadowy to enter into reliable history. But not so with the Seneca Nation, which succeeded to the territory of the Neutrals.

The Seneca Nation was the most numerous and powerful of the Six Nations, and its history may be traced with tolerable accuracy for near two hundred years. Who has not heard of Farmer's Brother, the brave and sagacious warrior, the calm and judicious statesman, and the eloquent orator? His residence was at Farmer's Point on the Big Buffalo creek, just below the railroad bridge. I am told, by those who knew him, that in addition to those striking intellectual gifts, which marked him as one of Nature's noblemen, he possessed a gigantic and well proportioned frame, and moved with a majestic air, which said to all observers that he was born to command. Though he lacked the cultivation of civilized life, and the grace which Christianity alone can bestow, yet, as an untutored savage, one might look at him, and say to all the world, "Every inch a king."

So of Corn Planter. Though a half-breed, he was an Indian by education and habit; brave in battle, wise in council, and firm in purpose; faithful to his friends, and implacable to his enemies. No man can read his eloquent appeal to President Washington, in December, 1790, in which he set forth the wrongs done to his then humbled and supplicating nation, without feeling that his simple eloquence touches a cord of

sympathy that vibrates in alternate pity and resentment. His residence was on a reservation given him by the State of Pennsylvania, on the Allegany river; but much of his public life was spent in attending councils in this vicinity. I saw him once, an aged man, bending under the weight of ninety years; yet he brought to my office, in his saddle-bags, all the treaties, on parchment, with his nation, and spread them out very deliberately on the floor; and then, commencing with the first, he gave me, through an interpreter, a succinct history of each, and concluded by saying, in his own expressive language, that the "Indians were very *hungry* for their annuities."

Though there are many others whose biographies should be preserved by this Society, yet I shall mention but one more, and that is Red Jacket, the celebrated Indian orator. He lived and died and was buried in our vicinity. His life has been written by W. L. Stone, but the book is nearly out of print. It should be preserved among the archives of this Society. He was Nature's orator, and rose by his oratorical powers alone, from the lowest grade to the rank of chief; and he exercised a powerful influence in the councils of his nation. But his fame, like that of Patrick Henry, must rest mostly on tradition. His figures of speech were bold, beautiful and striking; but of course we have only the skeleton of them in the meagre translation of ignorant interpreters, who were not skilled either in the Indian or English language. I have often wished that I understood his language, and could hear him on some great occasion that called forth his utmost powers, that I might compare him with some of our own orators whose fame is destined to live forever.

The first time I saw him was in this town in 1822. I had read some of his speeches, heard much of his fame, and I looked up to him with a kind of juvenile reverence, such as boys are apt to feel for great men at a distance. I solicited and obtained an introduction, and he evidently felt flattered by the reverential awe with which I looked at him, for I could not converse



with him. He drew himself up with great dignity, and ostentatiously pointed to a silver medal suspended upon his breast, and in a few words of broken English, and with evident pride and satisfaction, gave me to understand it was a present from Washington, whom he called his friend. A few hours after, my attention was called to him again, and I saw him, apparently unconscious, being dragged along by two Indians, who laid him under the shadow of a pile of boards, and left him. He had tasted the Circean draught, and was transformed to a beast. I could not help exclaiming: "Oh! that men should put an enemy into their mouths, to steal away their brains."

All the imaginary splendor with which my youthful fancy had adorned this Indian orator, vanished in a moment. Alas! how often is it the case that a nearer view of greatness discovers defects which we did not see at a distance. So the traveler, viewing the Alps at a distance, fancies that they present a beautifully-rounded surface, which he can walk over with ease; but when he approaches them he finds them deformed, with rough, projecting crags and deep gorges, that obstruct his passage.

But, turning from the aboriginals, who would not like to know something of the earlier settlers in this region? Fifty years ago, the "Holland Purchase" was the land of promise. Men gathered here from the four points of the compass, and before society was amalgamated, or could be toned down by attrition, there were many striking, original characters. It is not too late to rescue from oblivion some sketches of these extraordinary men, and daguerreotype the leading traits of their characters for the amusement and instruction of posterity. Many of these men, who have left their mark upon our institutions, could not boast of much book-learning; but they knew the world, and had the courage and talent that fitted them to fight successfully the great battle of life.

The three liberal professions, Divinity, Law and Medicine, had also their representatives in our infant city; to which may well be added a fourth, the public press, which is peculiarly rich



in historic reminiscences. The names of these persons are too numerous to mention here, and to select some might appear invidious. I therefore pass them over, and call your attention to the various religious and charitable institutions, the histories of some of which have already been ably given to the public; and to these the others should be added.

But, above all, the history of this city, during the war of 1812, should be written and preserved among the archives of this Society. It is a dark and bloody chapter, filled with the horrors of a conflagration of the town in mid-winter, and the misery of the fugitives flying from the terrific scene, and the tomahawk and scalping knife. But even this dark picture may be relieved by some deeds of heroism and generosity.

Finally, let this institution be the grand repository of every thing calculated to throw light on our history. Books, newspapers, letters, pamphlets, maps, medals, and relics of every description, should be deposited here; and let our citizens unite heart and hand in building up this Society, which, while it does justice to the dead, reflects honor upon the living.



# THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF BUFFALO.

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READ BEFORE THE BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY, APRIL 7, 1863.

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BY WILLIAM KETCHUM, ESQ.

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As preliminary to the introduction of the subject which is to engage our attention at this time, it may be well for us to settle, so far as we can, the time or period when the present name of our city became the popular one, and was introduced into general use. This is a more difficult matter than at first might be supposed.

It is well known that when the agents of the "Holland Company" first surveyed the land upon which our city stands, into village lots, in 1801-2, they gave it the name of "New Amsterdam." But there is no evidence that this name enjoyed popular favor or was in general use. The Company continued to use it in their conveyances of lots until 1811 or '12, when it was dropped, and the name of BUFFALO substituted.

"Buffalo Creek" had been the name by which this locality was known and designated, from a period certainly as early as 1784; as it is used in the treaty made with the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix in that year. It is probable it was known by that name much earlier than this, perhaps from the first settlement by the Senecas; which it is likely did not take place until



after Sullivan's Expedition in 1779. The name is mentioned in the "Narrative of the Captivity of the Gilbert Family," prisoners among the Senecas in 1780 or '82. It is also called "Buffalo Creek" in a treaty held with the "Six Nations" in 1789, and again in the treaty at Canandaigua in 1794.

By an act of the Legislature of this State, passed March 19th, 1802, a treaty was authorized to be held with the Indians for the purchase of the "Mile Strip" on the Niagara river, from "Buffaloes Creek" to the Steadman Farm; and on April 6th, 1803, an act was passed by the Legislature of this State, guaranteeing to the Indians of the Six Nations the right "to pass and repass upon any turnpike road which may hereafter be established from the town of Canandaigua to Buffalo Creek or its vicinity."

In 1805, Congress established a collection district, to be called the "District of Buffalo Creek;" the collector of said district to reside at "Buffalo Creek." Erastus Granger was the first resident Collector of Customs. General Irvine, of Pennsylvania, had been appointed the first Surveyor of Customs, when this place was included in the District of Presque Isle, now Erie.

The name "Buffalo," which was evidently derived from the name of the creek, was used to designate the settlement here, quite early. In a letter of General Irvine to General Washington in 1788, this place is spoken of as "Buffalo." I have found no other record of the name as early as this, and was led for that reason to doubt the correctness of the copy of the letter as given in the *Historical Magazine* of February, 1863; and I wrote to Dr. W. H. Irvine, who furnished it for publication. The following is his answer:

"It is now some forty odd years since I made the copy of the letter to which you refer, and I cannot say that I committed no error in transcribing from the original; but I think I must have made a *literal copy*. I certainly could not have manufactured the remarks in which the word 'Buffalo' occurs."

General Irvine, from his having commanded the Western

Department from 1781 to 1783, and engaged in the defense of the frontier, must have been familiar with all the names of localities in Western New York; and you will note the expression is, "from Buffalo to Presque Isle,"—the latter being the name of the present city of Erie. Presque Isle was then in the State of New York, and Mr. Irvine adds:

"And to his (Gen. Irvine's) address our state is indebted for the acquisition of 'The Triangle,' or Erie county."

Mr. B. W. Pratt, now living, with whom I have recently conversed on the subject, and whose recollections seem to be very clear and distinct, says, that when his father, Mr. Samuel Pratt, returned to Vermont from a visit to this place in 1803, he called it Buffalo. They were to remove to "Buffalo," and did so, arriving here in 1804.

Our legislative records show that as early as 1772, the state, then a colony, was divided into counties, and the whole western part of the state was included in "Tryon county," after Governor Tyron, the last of the Royal Governors.

In 1784 the name was changed to "Montgomery county," after General Richard Montgomery; and in 1801 the County of Ontario was organized. The boundary extended west to the state line; and all that part of the county west of the Genesee river was organized into a town, by the name of "Northampton,"—a pretty extensive town, truly.

In 1802, the County of Ontario was again divided, and the County of Genesee erected; and in 1808 the County of Niagara was established, the court-house and jail to be built "at Buffalo, or New Amsterdam."

By the same act, the village of Buffalo was included in the town of Willink, which bounded west on the Cattaraugus creek. In 1808 the *town* of Buffalo was erected, extending easterly to what is known as the "transit line," and in 1813 the *village* of Buffalo received its first charter.

I have been perhaps needlessly particular in mentioning all these changes in the names and boundaries of the towns and



counties in Western New York, as they are all matters of record. But, as facts, they are not familiar even to those most conversant with our early history; and they serve better than almost everything else, to show the great change and rapid improvement which have taken place within the recollection of some who are now living. I trust I shall be excused, therefore, for referring to them in this place, and at this time.

Professor Timothy Dwight, who visited Buffalo in 1804, speaks of the then population thus:

“The inhabitants are a casual collection of adventurers, and have the usual character of such adventurers, thus collected, when remote from regular society. We saw about as many Indians in this village as white people.”

A misapprehension prevails to some extent in regard to the Indian names as applied to this locality, which had better be explained before entering upon the main question, as it may serve to disencumber the subject before us, of what has embarrassed the minds of some who have supposed they discovered what appeared to be mistakes or contradictions.

The Indians applied the name “Te-osah-way,” or in our language, “Place of Basswood,” to their *settlement* or *village*; and “Tick-e-ack-gou-ga-ha-unda” or “Buffalo creek,” to the *stream* only.

The supposed discrepancy between “Te-osah-way” and “Te-hos-ororon” consists in the fact that the former is the *Seneca*, and the latter the *Mohawk* pronunciation of the same word. So also in regard to what has been suggested to be a mistake of the scribe, or interpreter, in using the name “Buffalo creek” instead of “Beaver creek” in the treaty with the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix in 1784, and in other public records, between that time and 1790, when Corn Planter is said to have, on one occasion, called it “Beaver creek.”

It is much more reasonable to suppose that the mistake was made in the interpretation of Corn Planter’s speech, for the reason that the name of the beaver and the buffalo, in the Seneca tongue, have precisely the same termination; and might,



by an unskillful or inattentive interpreter, be mistaken one for the other; for "*Buffalo*" is "Tick-e-ack-gou;" "*Beaver*" is "Ack-gou-e-ack-gou." Here, undoubtedly, was the mistake; and not in the treaties and other public records, where the name "Buffalo creek" is uniformly used. I never heard the name "Beaver creek" applied to this stream, in an intercourse of more than twenty-five years with the Senecas.

In the Inaugural Address of the Hon. President of this Society, last year, the origin of the name our city bears, was made the subject of discussion; and doubts were expressed in regard to the theory entertained that it was derived from the supposed fact, that the buffalo or American bison, formerly visited this locality. These doubts were expressed in the following language:\*

"I have never seen any reliable statement that the buffalo, in his wild state, was ever found in Western New York. I believe that his native haunt was in the great prairies of the West, *and nowhere else on this Continent.*"

In an article which appeared in the *Historical Magazine* for December, 1862, remarking upon these observations, the writer cites a number of authorities to show that the buffalo not only once lived in the western part of this state, in Ohio, Kentucky and Virginia, but ranged over nearly the whole of the North American Continent. Another writer, in the January number of the same magazine, throws doubt upon all the authorities quoted by the December correspondent, and agrees with Mr. Fillmore, and says:

"From all my reading, I had concluded that the bison was not found in the lake region, and was never as far west (east) as New York (state.)"

It is, perhaps, not surprising that the general reader of the early "French Relations" should find very little to instruct or enlighten either in matters of Science or Natural History. The mission of the early Jesuit writers was of a different character, and embraced far different objects; and if we find occasional errors of fact, and sometimes more than discrepancies

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\*See Address, *ante*, p. 3.

of statement in regard to their peculiar purposes and pursuits, it should not go to invalidate their statements in regard to matters of entire indifference. It will not escape the attentive reader of these early writers, that there existed a feeling, to say the least of it, of rivalry between the Franciscans, who were the very earliest missionaries to the New World, and the Jesuits, who followed them, and ultimately supplanted them altogether. Nor should it be forgotten that the self-denying labors of these men were made available by the French government for political purposes; and that their influence was a real "power in the State."

The question as to the origin of the name of our city engaged the public attention at a former period of our history. Nearly twenty years ago an anonymous communication\* appeared in the *Commercial Advertiser*, then edited by the late Dr. Foote. The following is a copy:

"MR. EDITOR:—I understand the Indian name of Buffalo creek is To-se-o-way. Will some of your Indian philological correspondents give us the meaning of the word? I should be happy, also, to know the *origin* of the present name of our city. "Q."

The inquiry thus made called out several replies in the papers then published; all anonymous. One in the *Daily Pilot* was as follows:

"The name of the Big Buffalo creek, and the point of land where our city is built, in the Seneca tongue, is Do-yo-wa, pronounced Do-sh-wa, signifying 'the Place of Bass-wood,' on account of the great quantity of that tree in the vicinity. Sometimes it is pronounced Da-sha-ho,—D taking the sound of T. You are, undoubtedly, familiar with the anecdote† relating to the 'buffalo meat' from which the name of the city arises.

"O-GE-MA." ‡

Another communication, dated "Buffalo Creek Reservation," appeared in the *Commercial Advertiser* at the same time, which is as follows:

\*Now known to be by O. H. MARSHALL, ESQ.

† See, for a version of this anecdote, Inaugural Address, *ante*, p. 4, and the letter of REV. ASHER WRIGHT, *post*, p. 37.

‡ A. J. SHELDON, ESQ.



“In reply to the inquiries of your correspondent ‘Q,’ in your paper of June 26th, permit me to say that the old Indians tell us that the banks of the Buffalo creek, for some distance from its mouth, were anciently lined with bass-wood trees; hence the name Ti-yu-syo-wa (with the last vowel nasalized) which means ‘at the place of bass-woods,’ or, as our venerable ex-President (Van Buren) has it, at ‘Lindenwald.’ As to the origin of the name ‘Buffalo,’ I am as much in the dark as your correspondent.

“GA-I-WI-YU.”\*

Another communication to the *Commercial Advertiser* was published at about the same date, from which the following is an extract:

“Taking it for granted that the inquiry as to the origin and meaning of the name ‘Tu-shu-way’ was made with a desire for information, I cheerfully contribute what little I possess, to throw light upon the early history of our city; connected as it is with the history of a noble race, fast sinking into oblivion; and whose unwritten history lingers only in the recollection of a few survivors of the once-powerful ‘Six Nations.’ Although the different tribes composing that great confederacy spoke different dialects, it is evident they sprang from the same original source. Hence it is not unlikely that the names of places given by former tribes, may have been retained by the Senecas, and thus their original signification lost.

“The occupation or settlement of Buffalo by the Senecas is of comparatively recent date. The Indian tradition is, that the Eries, a powerful and warlike nation, who resided upon the south shore of our lakes, with other confederate tribes, here and on the Eighteen Mile and, perhaps, Cattaraugus creeks, were overthrown by a numerous war party of the Six Nations, in a great battle fought at, or near, the outlet of the Honeoye lake, in (now) Ontario county. The flight of the Eries and their allies immediately followed. They were pursued by the victorious warriors of the Six Nations, for five months, and were driven beyond the Mississippi.

“The occupation of this locality by the Senecas followed these events. When they arrived here, they found huts, or houses, covered with *bass-wood bark*. This tree has the peculiarity of being easily peeled, at all seasons of the year, and the wood was used for canoes; and on these accounts it assumed an importance in the eyes of the aboriginal settler, equal to that of a stone quarry or an extensive pinery to the pioneers of our early settlements in more civilized life. This, to them, important characteristic was seized upon, and, probably, stood prominent among the inducements to immigrate hither.

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\*REV. ASHER WRIGHT.



“The name ‘*Te-osah-way*’ is a compound word, significant of this fact. It is not literally ‘*osah*,’ ‘*bass-wood*,’ nor ‘*cush-nah*,’ ‘*bark*,’ as some contend, but ‘*Te-osah-way*,’ that is, ‘*where bass-wood is*,’ or, ‘*the place of bass-wood*.’

“The Senecas were conversant with the fact that the buffalo formerly visited the ‘*salt lick*,’ or spring (on the bank of the creek) in this vicinity; and hence they called Buffalo creek ‘*Tick-e-ack-gou-ga-ha-unda*,’ and Buffalo village ‘*Tick-e-ack-gou-ga*.’ But ‘*Te-osah-way*’ was the earlier designation, and, probably, originated in the name I have suggested.

“KI-EU-WA-NA.” \*

A communication from “Q,” the author of the original inquiry, appeared in the *Commercial Advertiser* soon after the publication of the foregoing, from which I make the following extracts:

“MR. EDITOR:—I have been much interested in the respective attempts of my brothers O-GE-MA, KI-EU-WA-NA and GA-I-WI-U, to throw light, in answer to my inquiry, upon the meaning of the Indian name of Buffalo creek, written by me To-se-o-way; that being the designation upon Joseph and Benjamin Ellicott’s map of the Holland Purchase, published in 1800.

“Although my brothers do not quite agree in their orthography, there seems to be no essential difference between them. The word, as written by GA-I-WI-U, is ‘*Ti-yu-syo-wa*,’ which orthography I prefer to that of Tu-shu-way, or Do-yo-wa. The former, when properly pronounced, has the sonorous and musical peculiarities of the Seneca tongue. O-GE-MA and KI-EU-WA-NA, who are independent witnesses, have undoubtedly arrived at the true meaning of the word, which has reference to the bass-woods which formerly lined the banks of the creek. The primitive meaning is, ‘among the bass-woods.’

“O-GE-MA and KI-EU-WA-NA differ in their explanation of the *origin* of the name of Buffalo. The former has made too large draughts upon fiction to entitle his legend to credit; and thereby throws doubt upon the existence of any such ‘chronicle’ as he refers to. The statement of KI-EU-WA-NA is more plausible, showing that our creek and the neighboring Indian village were named by the Indians after the buffalos, which formerly frequented the well-known ‘lick’ on its banks.

“History establishes the fact that these animals formerly ranged as far east as the St. Lawrence. “Q.”

This last statement of “Q” is, undoubtedly, a mistake, into

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\* The Author.

which he has been led, as others have been, by reading the journal of Father Le Moine, of a journey he made from Quebec to the village of the Onondagas, in 1654, in which he speaks of a herd of wild cows that he saw on the banks of the River St. Lawrence, above the rapids, five or six hundred in one drove; but they were, undoubtedly, moose or elk. For on his return voyage he says, under date of September 4th (of the same year):

“Traveling through vast prairies, we saw, in divers quarters, immense herds of wild bulls and cows. Their horns resemble, in some respects, the antlers of the stag.”

Of course, they were either elk or moose. In another place he says:

“Droves of twenty cows plunged into the water, as if to meet us. Some were killed, for the sake of amusement, with the blows of an axe.”

Perhaps it is no more surprising that the moose were once so plenty, where now they are unknown, than that buffalos should have once roamed over the spot where we now dwell, and left their bones as the only memorial of their presence, mingled with those of other animals about the salt lick (near the sulphur spring) in our immediate vicinity.

But, as has been already observed, doubts have been entertained and expressed, as to the truth or probability of the statements upon which the theory as to the origin of the name of our city rested, from the supposed improbability of the tradition of the Indians on that subject. These doubts are predicated upon the insufficiency of the “evidence that the buffalo in his wild state was ever found in Western New York;” the views presented being, first, that none of the early visitors to this region, who have left a record of their travels, *saw* them; and, second, that the great prairies of the West being their “native haunts,” they were never found in this region. Let us examine these two classes of objections in a spirit of candor, and see whether they are entitled to the weight given them by those who have examined the subject with equal candor and patience.

In regard to the first class of objections, if it is intended to



assume that there is no *recorded* evidence of the fact that buffaloes were seen here by those who made the record, it is, undoubtedly, true; but it by no means follows that there is no "reliable" evidence of the *fact*.

The nature of the case precludes the possibility of such testimony; and if we show that we have the best evidence that the nature of the case admits of, and that it all concurs in establishing the truth of the Indian tradition, that the buffalo, in his wild state, visited the salt lick upon the banks of our creek, then the statement of our oldest Indian residents, made in 1820, is entitled to rank as "reliable testimony."

I consulted the oldest men of the Senecas, living in 1820, as to their own knowledge and belief on the subject. They had no doubt of the fact, though none of them pretended to have seen them here. They assured me that within their own recollection the bones of the buffalo, with those of other herbivorous animals which had been killed by the wolves, panthers and other carnivorous beasts that resorted hither in pursuit of their prey, were found at the salt lick. When asked as to the period when buffaloes were seen here, they fixed the time, in round numbers, at one hundred years before that time, which would be in 1720. It is not probable that the buffalo ranged as far east as this, long after the introduction and general use of fire-arms among the Iroquois or Six Nations, which was probably prior to this date; and as they only visited this locality at particular seasons of the year, and being a very shy animal, particularly when solitary or not in herds, they would be easily frightened away, perhaps not to return, even temporarily.

The Indians began to obtain fire-arms as early as 1650 or '60, as we find it was made a subject of complaint by the French government in Canada, that the English or Dutch, in New York, were furnishing arms and ammunition to the Iroquois; which enabled them to carry on a destructive war against the western nations who claimed French protection. It could not be expected, therefore, that the first Europeans who visited

here would find the buffalo. He had previously been driven from this locality, which may never have been his permanent residence. It is admitted, I believe, that within the recollection of persons now living, the buffalo has "been seen in his wild state," in Ohio, probably within less than two hundred miles of this city. Mr. Thomas Moorehead, a resident of Zanesville, writes thus, under date of February 13th, 1863:

"Capt. Ross, who has lived here fifty-five years, says that Ebenezer and James Ryan often talked with him of having killed buffalos on the branch of Will's creek, which is still called the 'Buffalo Fork,' twenty miles east of Zanesville. The Ryans were Indian fighters, and this must have been before Wayne's treaty. Buffalo 'beats' are frequent on the ridges between this place and Marietta; at least there are several of those beats."

In view of these facts, it would be extraordinary indeed, if, in the absence of civilization or any natural obstacles to oppose or hinder his progress, the buffalo should not range as far east as this, and even farther; for there is nothing in the nature of the country or its climate to prevent this, as we shall abundantly show. Early travelers, almost without exception, speak of the buffalo as being abundant on the south shore of Lake Erie.

The journey of La Salle from the Illinois river to Quebec in the winter of 1680, must have carried him through what are now the states of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Western Virginia, and a part of Pennsylvania and Western New York. But he evidently kept to the south of the shore of Lake Erie. He gives a list of the animals that inhabited the region through which he passed. He says:

"The mountains are covered with bears, stags, wild goats, turkey-cocks and wolves, who are so fierce as hardly to be frightened at our guns. The wild bulls are grown somewhat scarce, since the Illinois have been at war with their neighbors (the Iroquois), for now all parties are continually a-hunting of them."

La Hontan, who accompanied an expedition of the Illinois against the Iroquois, in 1687-8, coasted down the south shore of Lake Erie. He says:



“ The Lake Erie is justly distinguished with the illustrious name of Conti—a French governor—for assuredly it is the finest lake upon earth. You may judge of the goodness of the climate from the latitude of the countries which surround it. I cannot express what vast quantities of deer and turkeys are to be found in those woods, and in the vast meadows that lie upon the *south side of the lake*. At the bottom of the lake (*fond du lac*) we find *wild beeves*, upon the banks of two rivers that disembogue into it without cata-racts or rapid currents. The banks of the lake are commonly frequented by none but warriors, whether the Iroquois, the Illinois, or the Omiamies, &c., and it is very dangerous to stop there. By this means it comes to pass that stags, roebucks and turkeys run in great bodies up and down the shore all round the lake.

“ In former times the Errieronons and the Andastagueronons lived upon the confines of the lake, but they were exterminated by the Iroquois, as well as other nations marked upon the map.”

Charlevoix, who made the journey from Quebec to the Mississippi in 1721, following nearly the route of La Salle in 1679, in describing the journey across Lake Ontario, says:

“ We intended to go into the *Riviere Aux Bœufs* (Buffalo river), but we found the stream shut up by the sands, which often happens to the little rivers that empty into the lakes. About two in the afternoon, we entered into the River Niagara, formed by the great fall, which I shall mention presently.”

After describing the passage up the river to a point beyond which they could not go with their boat, and their visit on foot to the falls, and passage up the river to the rapids at what is now Black Rock, he proceeds:

“ I departed on the 27th of May, 1721, from the entrance of the Lake Erie. The route is to keep the north coast. Lake Erie is a hundred leagues long from east to west; its breadth from north to south is about thirty. The name it bears is that of a nation of the Huron language, settled on its borders, and which the Iroquois have entirely destroyed. *Erie* means *cat*; and the Eries are named in some of the ‘Relations,’ the ‘Nation of the Cat.’

“ The 28th I went nineteen leagues, and found myself over against the great (*grand*) river, which comes from the east in 42 deg. 15 min. The first of June, being Whit-Sunday, after going up a pretty river almost an hour, which comes from a great way, and runs between two fine meadows, we made a portage of about sixty paces, to escape going round a point which

advances fifteen leagues into the lake. They call it 'Long Point.' It is very sandy, and produces naturally many vines. At every place where I landed, I was enchanted with the beauty and variety of the landscape, bounded by the finest forests in the world. Besides this, water-fowl swarmed everywhere.

"I cannot say there is such a plenty of game in the woods, but I know that on the *south side* of the lake, there are *vast herds of wild cattle*. On the fourth (of June) we were stopped a good part of the day on a point which runs three leagues north and south, which they call Point Peleé.\* There are many bears in this country; and last winter they killed on Point Peleé alone above four hundred."

After describing his journey to Mackinac and to the mouth of the St. Joseph river, near the southern extremity of Lake Michigan, where the French had previously established a post and built a fort, he passed up that river to a point where it bends farthest to the south (South Bend.) They carried their canoes over a short portage to the head waters of the Kankakee, a confluent of the Illinois, and passed down that tortuous stream through extensive flat prairies, until they entered the Illinois river. He says:

"The meadows here extend beyond the sight, in which the buffaloes go in herds of two or three hundred. Everywhere we met with paths that are as beaten as they can be in the most populous countries, yet nothing passes through them but buffaloes."

Thus far we have the evidence of the early French travelers. They establish the fact of the existence of the buffalo upon the south shore of Lake Erie down to about 1721.

We will now proceed to examine the evidence derived from other sources, subsequent to the period last named.

I have already produced evidence of the presence of the buffalo in the south-eastern part of Ohio, in the vicinity of Zanesville, to the period of the first settlement of that state, about the close of the war of the Revolution. Mr. Thomas Ashe, in a letter dated at Erie, Pa., after he had made a minute

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\* This was a great crossing place for several kinds of animals, as well as wild turkeys, passing from island to island, on the ice, in winter, and by flight or swimming in the summer.



examination of the head waters of the Allegany and Monongahela rivers, in 1806, gives the following statement of an old man, one of the first settlers in that country, who built a log house (hut) upon the borders of a salt spring (lick):

“He informed me that for several seasons the buffaloes paid him their visits with the utmost regularity. They traveled in single files, always following each other at equal distances, forming droves on their arrival, of about three hundred each. The first and second year, so unacquainted were these poor brutes with the use of this man’s house, or its nature, that in a few hours they rubbed the house completely down, taking delight in turning the logs off with their horns; while he had some difficulty to escape being trampled under their feet, or crushed in his own ruins. At that period he supposed there could not be less than ten thousand in the neighborhood of the spring. They sought for no manner of food, but only bathed and drank, three or four times a day, and rolled in the earth (mud) or reposed with their flanks distended, in the adjacent shades; and on the fifth or sixth day, separated into distinct droves, bathed, drank and departed in single files, according to the exact order of their arrival. They all rolled successively in the same hole, and each thus carried away a coat of mud to preserve the moisture of the skin; which when hardened and baked in the sun, would resist the stings of millions of insects that otherwise would persecute these peaceful travelers, to madness, or even to death.

“In the first and second years, this old man, with some companions, killed six or seven hundred of these noble creatures, merely for the sake of their skins, which, to them, were only worth two shillings each; and after this work of death, they were obliged to leave the place till the following season, or till the wolves, bears, panthers, eagles, rooks, &c., had devoured the carcasses, and abandoned the place for other prey. In the two following years the same persons killed great numbers out of the first droves that arrived, skinned them, and left their bodies exposed to the sun and air. But they soon had reason to repent of this; for the remaining droves as they came up in succession, stopped, gazed on the mangled and putrid bodies, sorrowfully moaned or furiously lowed aloud, and returned instantly to the wilderness in an unusual run, without tasting their favorite spring, or licking the impregnated earth, which was also once their most agreeable occupation. Nor did they, or any of their race, ever visit the neighborhood again.”

There are numerous salt springs, or “licks,” both in the eastern part of Ohio and in Western Pennsylvania; and Dr. W. H. Irvine informs me that some of the oil springs were

“deer licks.” It was in the vicinity of one of these springs, in Western Pennsylvania, probably not over one hundred miles from this city, that this old man’s cabin was located. If he was seventy-five years old when he made this statement to Mr. Ashe in 1806, we may fix the date of the exodus of the buffalo at about the year 1755.

Dr. S. P. Hildreth, who now resides at Marietta, Ohio, writes me under date of February 25th, 1863, as follows:

“There is no doubt of their (the buffalos) traversing the whole state of Ohio easterly into Pennsylvania, and the northern portion of New York, in the early stages of our history, or as late as the year 1750. I came to Marietta in 1806. I have seen many of the old inhabitants who have killed them, and eaten of their flesh. The flesh of the fat cow buffalo was considered to be better than that of domestic cattle. Near the vicinity of salt springs their paths or roads were very distinct and plain, after I came to Ohio; and *to this day*, on the hills, are large patches of ground, destitute of bushes or trees, where they used to congregate, to stamp off the flies, digging the surface into deep hollows called ‘buffalo stamps.’ The forests here were very open, and filled with rich pea-vines, and buffalo clover, a variety between the white and red kinds of our day.”

Mr. Albert Gallatin, when a young man, was employed as a surveyor in Western Virginia, and made the question of the eastern range of the buffalo a subject of investigation and study. He has given the result of this investigation in an article furnished for publication in the transactions of the American Ethnological Society, vol. ii., p. 50. In his introduction he says:

“Colonies of the buffalos had traversed the Mississippi, and were at one time abundant in the forest country between the lakes and the Tennessee river, south of which I do not believe they were ever seen. The name of ‘Buffalo creek’ between Pittsburg and Wheeling proves that they had spread thus far eastwardly, when that country was first visited by the Anglo-Americans.

“In my time, 1784–5, they were abundant on the south side of the Ohio, between the Great and Little Kanawha. I have, during eight months, lived principally on their flesh. The American settlements have, of course, destroyed them, and not one is now seen east of the Mississippi. They had also, at a former period, penetrated east of the Allegany mountains. But I



have been mistaken in supposing that they were to be seen only on the head waters of the Roanoke or Cape Fear rivers. It appears by the publication of the Westover papers, that as late as the year 1728 they were found by Col. Bird on the borders of Virginia and North Carolina, and also farther north, in what, if I am not mistaken, is now called Southampton county, in about latitude thirty-seven degrees and longitude seventy-seven degrees. The frequent name of 'Buffalo creek' indicates their former range."

In a letter written to me in March last, by John H. James, Esq., of Urbana, Ohio, this suggestion is made. He says:

"I have had occasion to discover that all our early hunters, and those best acquainted with the Indians, never gave an Indian name of any stream, but always a translation of it; hence our numerous 'Deer creeks,' 'Buck creeks,' 'Beaver creeks,' &c., all of which had been called so by the Indians. Your stream would naturally have its name in the same manner."

There are abundant authorities that might be quoted to show that the buffalo was found not only in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Kentucky and other adjoining states, but also in our own state. Thomas Morton, one of the early settlers of New England, in his "New English Canaan," published in 1632, says:

"They (the Indians) have also made description of great herds of well grown beasts that live about the parts of this lake Erocoise (now Lake Ontario), such as the Christian world, until this discovery, hath not been made acquainted with. These beasts are of the bigness of a *cowe*, their flesh being very good food, their hides good leather, their fleeces very useful, being a kind of *woolle*, and the salvages do make garments thereof."

We have already mentioned that Charlevoix speaks of the *Riviere aux Bœufs* (Buffalo creek) now "Oak Orchard creek," a few miles east of the entrance to the Niagara on Lake Ontario, in 1721. Its name was undoubtedly derived in the same way as our own Buffalo creek, but it had not the same means of perpetuating it by being the location of an aboriginal city; and had it not been for this early record, it would not now be known that it ever bore the name, since it is not known to the present inhabitants of that locality, as I have taken some pains to ascertain.

Doctor Richardson, in his *Fauna Boreali Americana*, a compendious history of the former range of the buffalo, or American bison, says:

“At the period when Europeans began to form settlements in North America, this animal was occasionally met with on the Atlantic coast; but even then it appears to have been rare to the eastward of the Apalachian mountains, for Lawson has thought it to be a fact worth recording that two were killed in one year on the Appomattox, a branch of the James river; and Warden mentions that at no distant date, herds of them existed in the western parts of Pennsylvania, and as late as 1766 they were pretty numerous in Kentucky. Great Slave lake was at one time the northern boundary of their range (in the fur region); but of late years, according to the testimony of the natives, they have taken possession of the limestone district, on the north side of that lake, and have wandered to the vicinity of the Great Marten lake, in latitude sixty-three or sixty-four degrees.

“So far as I have been able to ascertain, the limestone and sandstone formations lying between the Rocky mountain ridge and the lower eastern chain of primitive rocks, are the only districts in the fur countries visited by the bison:

“In these comparatively level tracts, there is much prairie land, on which they find good grass in the summer; and also many marshes overgrown with bulrushes and carices, which supply them with winter food. *Salt springs and lakes* also abound on the confines of the limestone, and there are several well-known *salt springs where bison are sure to be found at all seasons of the year.*”

Dr. Richardson accompanied the expedition of Capt. Back, in search of Capt. Ross, in 1832, as naturalist, and had superior opportunities to inform himself in regard to what he wrote of. He adds:

“The bisons are truly a wandering race, their motives of restlessness being either disturbance from hunters, or change of pasture.”

And he might have added,—search of salt licks or springs.

“They are less wary when they are in herds, and will then often follow their leaders, regardless of, or trampling down the hunter, posted in their way.”

In the *Natural History of the State of New York*, published



under an act of the Legislature, Mr. DeKay speaks of the buffalo as a *native* of this state, but "long since extirpated."

In the *Documentary History*, published by the same authority, we find, in a memoir of the Indians of Canada, by M. de Vaudreuil, under date of 1718, that it is said:

"Buffaloes abound on the south shore of Lake Erie, but not on the north."  
Again:

"Thirty leagues up the Miamie river, at a place called La Glaize, buffaloes are always found."

He also speaks of the "*Riviere aux Bœufs*" on Lake Ontario, in this state, which was mentioned by Charlevoix.

It is hardly necessary to accumulate testimony on this branch of our subject, which might be done almost indefinitely. It will be readily seen, that any argument, built upon the hypothesis that the buffalo, in his wild state, was never found in Western New York, or that he would not voluntarily live, even temporarily, in a climate like ours, or that his native haunt was confined to the great prairies of the West, will be found untenable. That he ranged over a vast extent of country when undisturbed, and no natural obstacles were in his way, is proved by all history and observation.

All accounts agree in representing the buffalo to be a great traveler. Notwithstanding his enormous and apparently unwieldy body, and comparatively small limbs, he has wonderful powers of endurance, and a speed nearly equal to that of an ordinary horse. Says Irving:

"Of all animals, a buffalo, when closely pressed by a hunter, has an aspect the most diabolical. His two short black horns curve out of a huge frontlet of shaggy hair, his mouth is open, his tongue parched and drawn up into a half crescent, his eyes glow like coals of fire, his tail is erect, tufted, and whisking about in the air; he is a perfect picture of mingled rage and terror."

Godman says:

"They have been seen in herds of three, four and five thousand, blackening the plains as far as the eye could view. Some travelers are of the opinion

that they have seen as many as eight or ten thousand in the same herd. The buffalo was formerly found throughout the whole territory of the United States, with the exception of that part east of the Hudson river and Lake Champlain, and of narrow strips on the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico."

These are, by no means, all the evidences going to sustain the Indian tradition, that the buffalo, in his native state, was once a visitor, at least, in this locality. That he was ever seen here by white men, is not at all probable, for the reason suggested, that he had been before they came, as he has been since, driven from all his ancient haunts, by advancing civilization; the representative of that civilization being fire-arms in the hands of the Iroquois; and the only memorial he left here was his bleaching bones around the "salt lick," on the banks of "Buffalo creek."

But the Buffalos, like their contemporaries, the aboriginal inhabitants of this Continent, are a doomed race! They have been driven little by little from all their ancient haunts or homes; even their bones have decayed out of our sight, and it is even now questioned whether there was ever a buffalo here! But when the last of his race shall have sunk down in silence and solitude, in the inaccessible gorges of the Rocky mountains, or in the far-off cold, sterile regions of the North, here shall flourish, in all its life, its activity and its beauty, a monument, to perpetuate his memory and his name, and carry it down the rapid stream of time, through all the generations of men who shall inhabit  
THE CITY OF BUFFALO.





## CORRESPONDENCE ON THE NAME OF BUFFALO.

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[LETTER FROM THE REV. ASHER WRIGHT.\*]

CATTARAUGUS RESERVATION, April 30th, 1855.

MY DEAR FRIEND :

Your letter has remained till now unanswered, because having just returned from Albany, it was necessary for me to devote a little time to bringing up the arrears of my business before I could devote myself to friends. I have but a few moments at command this afternoon, still I will reply briefly to your inquiries.

The Indian name of the creek has no connection with the English. It indicates that at some time it was remarkable for the bass-wood trees along its banks. Oo-sah is the Seneca name of the bass-wood, and they called the creek and the tract near its mouth "Ti-yoos-yo-wa," i. e., at the place which abounds with bass-woods. This, at length, became shortened to "Do-syo-wa," the present name for the Creek, City and Reservation.

As to the origin of "Buffalo," I have heard a story of which I will state the principal points, but without at all vouching for its correctness, except to say that some one has so far endorsed it as to insert it in a book; the title of the book, however, I have forgotten.

It is stated that, in an early day, while the present city was not yet entitled to rank as a village, some travelers from "down east" (probably from New York city), finding themselves so far away in the woods, naturally enough concluded that they must be in the vicinity of the buffalo, and began to feel a strong hankering of appetite for buffalo venison. They inquired of "mine host," or some of his retainers, if the buffalo were not often seen in this re-

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\* Of the Seneca Mission. Corresponding member of the Society. Died, April 13th, 1875.



gion, and were told that, though not as abundant as formerly, still they were seen not unfrequently. This intelligence sharpened their appetites, and they resolved on a buffalo hunt at once; but finally concluded to leave the fatiguing portion of the enterprise to be performed by men more competent for the business, who were despatched at once in pursuit of the so much coveted game. In due season they returned, with the report that they had failed to capture the old ones, but had succeeded in taking a nice suckling, which was joyful news to the party, and they immediately required it to be served up; and feasted upon it with great complacency, declaring that it had the finest relish of any meat they had ever tasted.

In due time they returned home with high anticipations of being lionized by all their acquaintances in consequence of their good fortune; but unluckily it leaked out, somehow, that the hunters, failing to find a buffalo *calf*, and determined not to disappoint them by returning empty handed, had shot a Buffalo *colt*, the progeny of an *old mare*, that they happened to fall in with at a sufficient distance in the forest, and they had actually been gratifying their palates *a la Cossack*, upon horse-flesh, while they supposed they were regaling themselves upon young buffalo. It was sufficient, ever afterward, to say "Buffalo," to recall to every one of them a very vivid recollection of the locality; and the joke having got into the possession of two or three mischief-loving tattlers, caused the name to be perpetuated in commemoration of the happy verdancy of the Gothamites.

This is substantially the story as I saw or heard it several years ago; but whether it hands down to us an actual occurrence, or was manufactured for the sport of it, I have no means of knowing. My paper is full, so I will close for the present by subscribing myself

Affectionately and respectfully yours,

A. WRIGHT.

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[LETTERS FROM NATHANIEL T. STRONG.\*]

IRVING, N. Y., July 10th, 1863.

DEAR SIR :

I have noticed, from time to time, a discussion in the newspapers, on the subject of the name of Buffalo,—that is, why the City of the Lakes is named "Buffalo."

The discussion, so far as I have seen, had not arrived at a satisfactory conclusion. It has taken a wide range and is distinguished for much ability and research.

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\* Or *Hon-non-de-uh*, a Seneca chief, and Corresponding member. Died Jan. 4, 1872.

I will, also, say a few things in connection with the subject, in a simple way. I know the prevailing idea has been, that the name "Buffalo" originated with the aborigines of the country, and that they probably gave that name, in their language, from some local cause or circumstances. Some have suggested, that the name was derived from the numerous herds of the buffalo or the "American bison," which roamed on the south shore of Lake Erie. The tradition of the Indians is to the effect that countless numbers of buffalo, many years ago, annually visited this region of country, in the months of June, July and August. The valleys and bottom lands were thickly covered with bulrushes which the buffalo were very fond of, and which were so thick that it is said a man could scarcely get through them.

As to the question whether the buffalo migrated so far north and east as the foot of Lake Erie, the evidence in favor of it is too strong to admit of any doubt. The "footprints" of the buffalo are still visible in some localities, as also the marks of the bear's tusks on the bark of the ancient trees which now stand in our woods, and could easily be deciphered by the old hunters. The nature and habits of the animal, too, all go to prove the fact, that the buffalo, early in the summer, came north and east, and in the later season receded to the south and west.

But the simple fact, that the buffalo annually roved, in countless numbers, along the southern shore of Lake Erie, is, to my mind, no evidence that the foot of the lake derived its name from that circumstance, any more than that of any other point where those animals were the most numerous, at every season of the year. They were equally so, doubtless, along the shore of the lake. I am of the opinion, therefore, that the name of Buffalo has no connection whatever with the animal of that name. The period when those animals resorted to this section of the country is too remote for the English to have given the translation of the *De-gi-yah-goh* ("Buffalo," in English), or to have ascertained the peculiar circumstances connected with the animal, in the naming of "Buffalo creek," when it first was known by that name.

When La Salle visited Buffalo in 1679, he found the Senecas near there, one hundred and odd years before Buffalo was settled by the whites. The Seneca Indians, in giving names to lakes, rivers, creeks, &c., generally had reference to some permanent and natural characteristic of the locality. From my knowledge of the Seneca language, the Seneca name *Dos-sho-wa*, is derived from a compound word *O-oh-sa*, bass-wood, and *De-ya-oh*, a cluster; hence, *De-ya-oh-sa-oh* is the original Seneca word, now spelt and pronounced *Das-sho-wa*, whether from a gradual change in the pronunciation of the word, or for beauty merely, I cannot say. The meaning is, that bass-wood clusters along the banks or edges of the creek.

The north branch of the Buffalo creek, above Sulphur springs, is called by



the Senecas, "*Ga-gah-doh-ga*," meaning "White-oak" creek, because, formerly, scarcely any other than white-oak trees grew there. The middle branch, passing by Jack Berrytown's, retains the name *Das-sho-wa*. The east branch, passing through the old Onondaga village, is called *Ga-an-na-da-dah*, or the creek "that has slate-stone bottom." Where these branches united, some four or five miles from its mouth, following the meanderings of the creek, the banks were full of bass-wood trees, and the trunks of the trees were clustered with the second growth of bass-wood, so dense that when in leaf one could scarcely see the creek. Hence the Senecas called the creek *De-ya-ooh-sa-oh*. This, doubtless, is the true origin of the Seneca name of the creek.

From whence then came the name of Buffalo? The Indian account is substantially this: that many years ago, *De-gi-yah-goh* (in English, Buffalo), a Seneca Indian of the wolf clan, built a bark cabin on the bank of the Buffalo creek, and lived there many years until his death. His occupation was that of a fisherman. A fisherman, in ancient times, with the Senecas, was an important person from the fact that the Indians, in the fishing season, almost wholly subsisted on fish, and *De-gi-yah-goh* was the chief fisherman of the Nation. The theory then is, that when the white pioneers came to that creek, they doubtless entered into the bark cabin of *De-gi-yah-goh*, and learned from him his name;—and the pioneers translated and gave the name to "Buffalo creek," after the Seneca fisherman whose bark cabin stood upon its banks.

In like manner, at a more recent date, Old Smoke, the father of the Seneca chief Young King, gave name to "Smoke's creek," near which he lived. Nothing, however, now remains to tell of his former residence, except a few ancient apple trees. I have often seen the trees from the cars of the Lake Shore railroad. They stand a sad memorial of the untoward fate of my race. Smoke's name was *Ga-ya-gua-doh*, meaning the "smoke has disappeared," or the "smoke is lost." I might multiply instances of this kind, in the giving of names to certain localities of the country, but I must close. I have written this hastily.

I am very respectfully yours, &c.,

N. T. STRONG.

TO G. H. SALISBURY, ESQ.,

Cor. Sec. Buffalo Historical Society.

IRVING, N. Y., Aug. 13th, 1863.

DEAR SIR:

I have read the paper you have prepared and read before the "Buffalo Historical Society" in April last; and which you were kind enough to send to me.

I shall notice only your two principal points; I agree with you as to the first branch of the historical fact you have labored to prove, and I think with success; that is, as to the fact that the buffalo did range on the south shore of Lake Erie as far east as the foot of the lake; how much farther, I am not now prepared to say.

The old Indians of the present day believe this fact, as though they had seen the buffalo themselves in this section of the country. My father used to tell me that the Indians were in the habit of hunting the buffalo down the Allegany river in a certain season of the year; they went sometimes below Pittsburgh, although they found the buffalo above. The buffalo crossed the Allegany and Ohio at that time of the year in large droves, and as many as were desirable were easily killed. The description of the animal, his habits and actions, by Mr. Ashe, in your paper, corresponds precisely with the facts related by my father, as he received them from the hunters. As to the second branch of your article I have anxiously sought to inform myself more fully; but I confess I have failed to reconcile my previous views with those you have so ably advanced.

My difficulties are, first, who among the Indians at that time could have possessed sufficient intelligence to communicate to an intelligent European interested in the traditional history of the country, as to the range and haunts of the buffalo in the vicinity of the now Buffalo creek, about the year 1775, or even before that period? On this point I have a very strong doubt; the lapse of time between the visits of the buffalo and the naming of the city of Buffalo is too considerable. If the tradition of the Seneca fathers had been communicated to the whites, why was no record made by them? If the communication had been made to intelligent men, some record would have been preserved to this day. If no communication was ever made by the Indians to any European, that, of course, precludes the possibility of knowing anything in a reliable form. All is conjectural—even the twilight of tradition fails to give any light on the subject. Most men of that day were in the pursuit of adventure; the claims of history were not thought of; other subjects engrossed men's minds. It is said that, in olden time, the buffalo congregated annually in great numbers, at The Lick or Salt Spring near Buffalo creek, hence the stream is called the "Buffalo creek." This is very plausible.



But you will observe that the Indians gave names to the more prominent and permanent features of nature, and according to the Seneca Indian custom either Salt, O-ji-ka-toh in Seneca; Spring, O-do-sote in Seneca; Lick, O-shoh, in Seneca; would be the natural and prominent features that would attach themselves to the creek; the buffalo here being merely incidental.

The Indian idea of name is, that nature proclaims its own name, as illustrated in the birds of the air, even to the smallest of the species: the Indian only repeats it.

I have been trying in vain to find a river, creek, lake, or mountain that now bears the name of any herbivorous animal in our state.

I have never heard anyone say among the Indians, that at any time "Buffalo creek" was called in Seneca by that name. I have never heard anybody say, that at any time it was called "Beaver creek," Na-ga-nia-goh.

That "Buffalo creek" was not popular with the more intelligent classes at the time Mr. Ellicott laid out the village of New Amsterdam is evident. If it had been, he doubtless would have named it Buffalo at once.

The analogous cases you have drawn from other localities merit some consideration; but in the absence of all local authority, they hardly apply to our case. We must look at this practically. From all the facts and circumstances, I think it is due to the truth of history to say that it is the Indian "Buffalo" to whom the creek and finally the city owes its name. Little fame will the poor Indian reap from it; but to the animal buffalo from which doubtless he derived his name, the millions in all time to come will award that honor. So then, if you have failed to establish by traditional or historical authorities the position you have assumed, you will have a reason to know, that it is as though you had.

I am very respectfully, yours, &c.,

N. T. STRONG.

To HON. WM. KETCHUM,

*Buffalo, N. Y.*

## THE LAST OF THE KAH-KWAHS.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, MARCH 13, 1863.

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BY DAVID GRAY.

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MUSE of the storied scroll, whose thoughtful eye  
Watched the long pageant of the years gone by;  
Whose patient art has touched and kept sublime  
All that is deathless of departed time:—  
Historic Muse, whose pilgrim feet have stood  
Where many a nation's star has set in blood,  
Or followed where the sacred dawn of Right  
Crept over Europe's late and lingering night,  
Shedding on Roman hills its passing smile,  
And brightening on the "silver-coasted isle":—  
Forth from thy home amid the graves of Kings  
And brooding gloom of half forgotten things,  
Come where thy broader path, O! History, waits  
And walk with Empire through her western gates:  
Come where a fairer day to earth is born,—  
The Old World's evening is the New World's morn,—

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NOTE.—For the thread of story upon which a part of these verses is strung, the writer is mainly indebted to O. H. MARSHALL, ESQ., whose contributions to the Buffalo press some fifteen or twenty years ago, over the signature of "Q," comprise nearly all that is known of the early Indian history of this locality. The Kah-Kwah, or, as it was termed by the French missionaries, the Neutral Nation of Indians, is shown, we think conclusively, by Mr. Marshall to have been the tribe which inhabited the site of this city previous to the conquest and occupation of the territory by the Seneca tribe of the Iroquois confederacy. The Neutral Nation was so called from the fact that it was observed by the Jesuit travelers to be at peace with the neighboring peoples. The date of the destruction of this remarkable tribe is fixed at about the year 1647, and various legends survive as to the circumstances



And, in the lustre of that larger sun,  
 Look forth and see thy grandest task begun.  
 No pomp or kingly glory here has birth,  
 Nor crumbling temple sinks to classic earth;  
 But, young and fair, beneath these western skies,  
 The emblems of a hundred empires rise.  
 And here are fields, amid whose thundrous strife  
 The Future's Hope, embattled, strikes for life.  
 Even now the wind is warm with war's red rain,  
 And Truth and Treason cross the sword again.  
 Hither, O! History, come and breathless wait  
 While Freedom trembles in the scale of Fate;  
 Here bring the mirror of thy magic page,  
 And catch the features of this grander age;  
 Come, for the path that seeks the West is thine,  
 And lo! we build thee, here, this wayside shrine!

And, sooth, its site, that woos the pilgrim's stay,  
 Might lure the Muse herself to brief delay:  
 Yonder the Lake, with heaven upon its breast,  
 Sleeps at the open portals of the West;  
 And the strong River, like a god in wrath,  
 Leaps from the calm upon his fateful path.  
 From yon gray ruin's shade the forms are fled  
 That came, but now, up-thronging from the dead;  
 But the great heart of Commerce, full and strong,  
 Throbs to the chime of swarthy Labor's song:

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which occasioned the Iroquois invasion. The most dramatic of these was transferred to paper by WM. KETCHUM, ESQ., in the *Commercial Advertiser* of July 12th, 1845. This is related as a tradition of the Erie or Cat Nation, but we believe "Q" has proved satisfactorily that this tribe inhabited a region to the westward, and that the tragedy embodied in the legend really refers to the Kah-Kwahs. According to the narrative of Mr. Ketchum, the fatal quarrel with the Iroquois arose out of a sort of barbaric tournament, which took place at Tu-shu-way ("the place of the linden or bass-wood trees," as the Indian village formerly located here was called), and in which the young men of the Iroquois and of the resident tribe participated. A relentless war followed this scene of savage revelry, which ended only in the almost total annihilation of the Neutral Nation. It is said that the last battle was fought near the old Indian mission house, a few miles from here.

Here, in the coming years, the Muse shall rest,  
And here to-night we hail her as our guest;  
And, sleeping by the sounding River's stream,  
Her slumber with its visioned Past shall gleam,—  
Hark, while I strive to read from History's dream:—

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The city sleeps; its changing features fade  
In the green depths of many a rustling glade;  
The wind of summer whispers sweet and low  
'Mong trees that waved three hundred years ago.  
The streamlet seeks the path it knew of yore,  
And Erie murmurs to a lonely shore;  
The birds are busy in their leafy towers;  
The trampled earth is wild again with flowers;  
And the same River rolls in changeless state,  
Eternal, solemn, deep and strong as fate.

It is the time when still the forest made  
For its dusk children a protecting shade;  
And by these else untrodden shores they stood,  
Embodied spirits of the solitude!  
When still at dawn, or day's serener close,  
The smoke-wreaths of the Kah-Kwah lodges rose.

No hoary legend of their past declares  
Through what uncounted years our home was theirs—  
How oft they hailed, new-glittering in the West,  
The moon, a phantom-white canoe, at rest  
In deeps of purple twilight—this alone  
Of all their vanished story has not flown:  
That, through unnumbered summers' long increase,  
The Neutral Nation was the home of peace.  
Far to the north the Huron war-whoop rang,  
And eastward, on the stealthy war-path, sprang  
The wary Iroquois; but like the isle



That, locked in wild Niagara's fierce embrace,  
Still wears the smile of summer on its face—  
(Love in the clasp of Madness)—so the while  
With peace the Kah-Kwah villages were filled.  
And, as the Lake's dark heart of storm is stilled,  
The fury of its surge constrained to calm  
Beneath the touch of winter's marble palm,  
So, when the braves of warring nations met,  
They changed the hatchet for the calumet,  
And hid with stolid face their mounting ire  
From the bright glimmer of the Kah-Kwah fire.

Year followed year, and peaceful Time had cast  
A misty autumn sunshine o'er the past,  
And, to the hearts that calmly summered there,  
The forehead of the future shone as fair;  
Save that perchance some wise and wakeful ear  
In the great River's ceaseless song could hear,  
Through the mirk midnight, when the wind was still,  
The murmured presage of approaching ill.

It came at last—the nation's evil day,  
Whose rayless night should never pass away.  
A calm foreran the tempest, and, a space,  
Fate wore the mask of joy upon his face.  
It was a day of revel, feast and game,  
When from the far-off Iroquois there came  
A hundred plumed and painted warriors, sent  
To meet the Kah-Kwah youth in tournament.  
And legend tells how sped the mimic fight;  
And how the festal fire blazed high at night,  
And laugh and shout through all the greenwood rang;  
Till, at the last, a deadly quarrel sprang,  
Whose shadow, as the frowning guests withdrew,  
Deepened, and to a boding war-cloud grew.

And not for long the sudden storm was stayed;  
It burst in battle, and in many a glade,  
Were leaves of green with fearful crimson crost,  
As if by finger of untimely frost.  
Fighting they held the stubborn pathway back,  
The foe relentless on their homeward track;  
Till the thinned remnant of the Kah-Kwah braves  
Chose, where their homes had been, to make their graves,  
And rallied for the last and hopeless fight,  
With the blue ripples of the lake in sight.

Could wand of magic bring that scene again  
Back, with its terrors, to the battle-plain,  
Into these silent streets the wind would bear  
Its mingled cry of triumph and despair;  
And all the nameless horror of the strife,  
That only ended with a nation's life,  
Would pass before our startled eyes, and seem  
The feverish fancy of an evil dream.  
For in the tumult of that fearful rout  
The watch-light of the Kah-Kwah camp went out.  
And, thenceforth, in the pleasant linden shade,  
Seneca children, only, laughed and played.  
And still the River rolled in changeless state,  
Eternal, solemn, deep and strong as fate.

A few strange words of a forgotten tongue  
That still by Lake and River's marge have clung,  
Are all that linger, of the Past, to tell,  
With their weird-sounding music, how it fell  
That here the people of that elder day  
Sinned, suffered, loved, hoped, hated, passed away.

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So History's dream is told, and, fading, fleet  
The shadows of the forest from the street;



But is it much to ask, if it were sought,  
That it return at times to tinge our thought?—  
To tell us, when the winter-fires are lit,  
And in the happy heart of home we sit,  
That other fires were here, ere ours had shone,  
And sank to ashes years and years ago;—  
That where we stand, and, watching, see the West  
Ebb, till the stars lie stranded on its breast,  
Or homeward ships, more blest than they of Greece,  
Returning with the prairie's Golden Fleece,  
To other eyes long since perchance was given,  
Through the same sapphire arch, a glimpse of heaven.  
And haply not in vain the thought shall rise  
To sadden, it may be, our reveries,  
That here have throbbed, with all the bliss of ours,  
Hearts that have mouldered upward into flowers!

# BUFFALO CEMETERIES.

READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, FEBRUARY 4, 1879.

BY WILLIAM HODGE.

THE formation of a burial place is generally one of the later things attended to in a new settlement, inasmuch as the utmost effort is needed to support the living and carry on the necessary improvements; and unless there should be death from accidental causes, there are no particular reasons to induce the pioneers to bear in mind the fact that any of them will be cut off from their labors, and become the silent tenants of the tomb.

Like other settlements in Western New York, Buffalo was lax in attending to the necessity of providing a resting place for the dead; and churches were organized and school houses erected ere it seemed to be noticed that death was as likely to invade here as elsewhere. But, as was even then so certain to be the case, the time for this duly arrived.

## THE JOHNSTON BURYING GROUND.

Captain William Johnston, a British officer, retired on half-pay, once owned a tract of about forty acres of land in what is now the business center of Buffalo. It was bounded on the north by Seneca street; west by Washington street; south by Little Buffalo creek, and east by a line which would include the forty acres; the said line running parallel with Washington street. As this place, even then, was the center of business at-



traction, residents meeting there for conversation, very naturally the settlement increased about Johnston's; and finally he laid out a small burial ground a few rods square on his homestead, at the corner of Crow (now Exchange) and Washington streets.

The place was afterwards owned by the late General Lucius Storrs, and since known as the "Sheldon place;" and when the Washington block was built in 1873-4, several skeletons were dug up by the laborers excavating for cellars. The street is now a number of feet below the original surface of the soil; and the removal of the earth for cellars rendered it necessary to excavate below the bottom of the deepest graves.

As these skeletons were found on the east side of the Sheldon lot, there is every reason to believe (and tradition deepens the impression) that more are interred on the next lot east, which is now occupied by the paint shop of J. Josephs.

The house was built by Mr. Joseph D. Hoyt, and afterwards passed into the hands of Mr. Waters, formerly of the firm of Kimberly & Waters, ship chandlers, &c. But there has been an ever-changing tide of occupants in the house. People of every color and nationality have lived there; and some of such bad repute that it would not be surprising in the least if the original tenants of this ossuary had had their numbers increased by the sudden taking off of unsuspecting persons decoyed there for purposes of plunder and murder. When the building is removed, and the lot excavated for larger cellars, it will not be unexpected if a dozen or more skeletons of different sizes are found on the north end of that and the adjacent lot, now occupied by the old cabinet shop of Oliver Pomeroy, which was erected in 1832.

It is understood that Captain Johnston was buried in his own cemetery in 1807. The first tenant was an infant son of the Captain; and burials did not cease there till several years after the establishment of a village burial place on lots 108, 109, 111, 112, since called Franklin Square, where now stands the massive City and County Hall.

THE FRANKLIN SQUARE CEMETERY.

The change to this burial place was made at a very early day. In fact, Captain Pratt went, the first year of his arrival here (1804), with Dr. Cyrenius Chapin, to Batavia, and obtained by "land contract" from the Holland Land Company, the Franklin Square lot for a village burying ground. The reasons for this change were, first: the title to the Johnston place was yet in the dower, and if it was not deeded to the village, there might be trouble in after years from a change of owners. This proved to be the case; for John (or Jack) Johnston (son of the old Captain), who inherited the property, encumbered it by a mortgage to Jasper Parrish as agent and trustee of the Cayuga Nation; and this mortgage not being paid, was duly foreclosed, and the place sold in 1811. And second: this site was deemed to be too near the center of a population numbering but a few score.

This Franklin Square lot was a central portion of the then beautiful Terrace, on whose grassy surface the Indians used to recline, and view the lake in all its pristine beauty; a scene which Judge Peacock described when he first came on the spot (being then nineteen years of age), saying, "It is one of the most beautiful views I ever put my eyes upon."

In the new cemetery the first interment was that of John Cochrane, a traveler from Connecticut, who died at Barker's tavern, a log house facing south, standing on the Terrace near the corner and west of Main street. As a verbal consent had been given by Mr. Ellicott to use the lots, which must have been considerably prior to 1804, the man from "the land of steady habits" was there buried; and from that time most, if not all, burials ceased in the Washington street place, except those of Johnston's family or relatives thereof. Tradition says that a very tall Indian, from his altitude termed "The Infant," was the second silent inhabitant of the village cemetery. Here in March, 1815, the noble and estimable Indian chief, Farmer's Brother, was buried with military honors. When the bodies



were removed to Forest Lawn, a tablet, with his initials formed by brass nails, was found; but like Job Hoysington's skull (p. 53) it disappeared in the process of removal.

Though this lot so early became the recognized place for burials, with the usual carelessness of early settlers, the title to it was not obtained from the Holland Land Company until 1821. This can easily be accounted for, as there was no village corporation to hold the gift; and after it had been in use some years, it was believed that the village had a right by possession. There was no individual ownership of the lots; but persons, on application, had family or single lots assigned them by the trustees, until 1832, when burials as a general thing were discontinued there. The last was in 1836, being that of the wife of Hon. Samuel Wilkeson, a daughter of Gamaliel St. John; and a special permit was granted for this purpose.

The old burying ground was remote from the village proper, and was covered with a growth of bushes and scrub oak, with a few larger trees. A part of it was used at one time as a site for a small wooden building, in which was kept an infant school.

In addition to the villagers, those who resided even as far out as the Plains (with the exception of a few families who buried on their own premises) brought their dead to the general gathering place. This irregular proceeding was stopped, as far as the city authority extended, in 1832, when the advent of the cholera caused very stringent sanitary measures to be taken.

#### THE COLD SPRING BURYING GROUND.

Long prior to that time, on the hill opposite "Cold Spring," on farm lot No. 59, now the southwest corner of Delaware and Ferry streets, there was a grave-yard like that of Captain Johnston. I well remember being present at burials there when a boy. One was that of a child of Mr. Seth Granger, who lived on the farm; another a child of a Mr. Caskey. These took place before the war of 1812. Hither, afterwards, gallant Job Hoysington's mutilated remains were brought, when

the fervid suns of the spring after the burning of Buffalo melted the snowy shroud by which he was first covered.

The death of Hoysington occurred as follows: On the morning of December 30th, 1813, he took his rifle and went to meet the British as they came marching up the river near the Grand Battery. He, with Captain Hull's Buffalonians, stood their ground well; but the three thousand and odd of new levies fled precipitately and left a few hundred to face as many Indians, and over a thousand disciplined British regulars. For a brief period they contested the field; but, seeing they were flanked, they retreated. Hoysington lingered, withdrew a little, stopped, and said, "I will have one more shot at them;" and that was the last that was known of him till the following spring, when his remains were found beside a log not far from the late Frederick Gridley's residence on North street, one or two blocks west of the Normal school building. A bullet had perforated, and a tomahawk had cleft, his skull; while his scalp was torn from his bleeding head as a trophy of savage conquest, and token of British inhumanity. His faithful rifle lay empty by his side, and no doubt his death was avenged ere it occurred. His remains were interred in this rural cemetery, and there they remained till 1850, when most of the bones of the nearly one hundred persons buried there, were exhumed, placed in boxes, and removed to a secluded place in "Forest Lawn." Among these relics, the skull of the mighty marksman was at once recognized by the injuries it had received, and many noticed it; but during the confusion incident to a removal, some one surreptitiously carried off this relic of Job Hoysington. It is doubtless in the possession of some curiosity monger of the city, but, "Who has it?" has often been asked in vain.

This ground was never formally granted for a cemetery, but by the consent of the owner was used for that purpose by the few families residing in the neighborhood.

In the grading and widening of Ferry street, in 1876, at the corner we are speaking of, there were some bones, but no en-



tire skeletons, plowed up. Having learned that there was no one appointed by the proper authorities of our city to look after these relics of early settlers and soldiers, who seem to have had none on the face of the earth to care for them, I took pains to collect, from time to time, all that were found, carried them to Forest Lawn, and had them buried with the others that had been taken there.

#### DELAWARE AND NORTH STREET BURYING GROUND.

About the year 1830, Hon. Lewis F. Allen bought of Judge Ebenezer Walden, on his own account, five acres, situated on the south-west corner of Delaware and North streets, and east of Bowery street.\* He then formed an association, consisting of the following persons, viz.: Lewis F. Allen, George B. Webster, Russell H. Heywood, Heman B. Potter and Hiram Pratt, as trustees, and had it surveyed into lots by Joseph Clary, Esq. A considerable number of lots were sold; but the smallness of the plot, and the fact that the southern part was full of springs, prevented many improvements; and most of the bodies deposited there have been removed to Forest Lawn, and the property is now held by the Forest Lawn Association. It is not at all likely that any more burials will ever take place there, as they are prohibited by a law of the State, and the lots around are occupied by beautiful residences.

#### THE POTTER'S FIELD.

In 1832, in anticipation of the cholera visiting Buffalo, which had just put on "city airs," burials in the old village (Franklin Square) cemetery, having been prohibited, except by special permission of the Council, it was deemed desirable to obtain another and more remote situation to be ready in case any sudden pestilence should demand increased room for the dead. Accordingly, I sold to the city five acres of farm lot No. 30, lying between North and Best streets, and west of Prospect street, for a "Potter's Field," or common burial place; and a

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\*Now Irving Place.

portion of it was set apart for the Roman Catholics, so that it could be consecrated according to their belief and form.

THE BLACK ROCK BURYING GROUND.

When the lands comprising the south village of Black Rock were surveyed in 1804 or 1805, there were two blocks, Nos. 41 and 42, appropriated by the State for burial purposes. These, however, were found to be too low, and hence not suitable; many, therefore, carried their dead even to the Franklin Square ground; and when Black Rock village was incorporated, Col. William A. Bird, in behalf of the corporation, procured the exchange of those two lots for one situated on higher ground; being lot No. 88 on North street, since known as the Black Rock burying ground. This lot was bounded by Jersey, Pennsylvania and Fourteenth streets, and the Mile Strip, or what is now "The Avenue."

When the "Guide Board Road" (now North street) was worked through, this lot was cut in twain, and a small triangle was left on the south side, in the old limits of Buffalo City. This small lot, by an arrangement with the Black Rock authorities, was used as a Potter's Field for the unfortunates who died at the poor-house; this building being a little to the west of it, next to the church of the Holy Angels, and now used for the parish school. In this little spot of ground have been, doubtless, laid, without a pitying eye to weep over their wreck, or a friendly hand to raise a tablet to their memory, as noble persons as have ever existed; but poverty and misfortune blighted their prospects, and they became dependents on the bounty of their fellow-creatures.

Many a time have I pondered over the unmarked hillocks here, and thought what tales could be revealed were the history of the unknown and unnoted dead under my feet made up into a living record. But they were not permitted to rest in peace. The City of Buffalo, a few years since, fenced in the lot, and desecrated the spot by using it as a public pound. Could no other vacant place be found, that even a pauper might not be



allowed to rest here, without having his last hold on earth made the stamping-place for vagrant cattle?

The main lot was used for years by the inhabitants of Black Rock; but burials having been discontinued for some time, the land was conveyed to that noble institution, the Charity Foundation of the Episcopal Church. As in the Franklin Square and North street public cemeteries there were no private lots here, but places were assigned by the authorities.

When the Forest Lawn cemetery was established, in 1850, many families bought lots and removed their dead from this ground. Since then, in grading Rogers street, many graves were dug up, and the bones collected and removed to Forest Lawn. And within the last few years, in grading "The Circle," which takes in most of this old burying ground, many more have been dug out and deposited there. More still remain, which should be properly taken care of. Although I ever disapprove of the practice of our city rulers in disturbing and removing the bones from our old burying grounds, yet, in this case, it seems to be a matter of public necessity; and as part have been removed, they may as well all be.

One grave in this spot was that of Capt. James Rough, a man of some note in early days, but now nearly forgotten, who was buried here in 1828. This noble-hearted man was one of the captains who early sailed on our lakes. I believe he had no relatives in this country, but many true-hearted friends, who, after his checkered life was ended, buried his body with becoming honor and respect. One, a countryman of his, a Scotchman, the eccentric Major Donald Frazer, to express the esteem in which he was held by all, placed a stone at the head of his grave, on which was cut the inscription and quaint epitaph printed below.

Capt. Rough's remains were removed by our honored townsman, John T. Lacy, April 26th, 1869, to the lot in Forest Lawn, where those from the old burying ground of Franklin Square were placed. They now lie near the large monument in the

center of this lot, by the side of Capt. Dox, an officer in the United States army during the war of 1812, and who was some years after (in 1822, I believe) appointed Collector of the Port of Buffalo.

EPITAPH.

Here lies the body of  
CAPT. JAMES ROUGH,  
A Son of Auld Scotia, who died  
Dec. 4th, 1828, aged 60.  
A Highland man's son placed this stone in  
Remembrance of his Friend.

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Here, moored beneath this willow tree,  
Lies Honor, Worth, and Integrity,  
More I might add, but 't is enough;  
'T was centered all in Honest Rough.  
With such as he where'er he be,  
May I be saved or damned.\*

The exact time when burials began in this Black Rock burying ground, on North street, is not now certainly known. There were two families, at least, at Black Rock, who buried on their own premises; those of Gen. Peter B. Porter and Ethan Ludlow. The bodies of Gen. Porter's family were subsequently removed to Niagara Falls. The bodies of the family of Mr. Ludlow were removed to the "Mathews and Wilcox" burying ground on the hill (see below, page 58), and subsequently to Forest Lawn. By some it is thought that burials began there soon after the war of 1812-15; others as late as 1826. But from what I can learn, the most reasonable conclusion is, that there were some burials there as early as 1820, or soon after. Col. William A. Bird says, "probably as early as 1825 at least." Cyrus H. De Forest says, "I helped to bury a friend there in 1827, and there were quite a large number of graves there before that time."

THE BIDWELL FARM BURYING GROUND.

There was a place on what was known as the "Bidwell Farm," where the dead were buried before the "Guide Board

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\*The last two lines of this are from Burns' epitaph on Gavin Hamilton.



Road" (or North street) ground above mentioned was opened. It will be of interest to say, just here, that the "Guide Board Road," spoken of above and on page 55, was, in the early days, the only wagon approach to Black Rock from the eastward; communication with Buffalo being mostly by the way of the beach of the lake, until Niagara street was opened, about the year 1809; a guide-post stood for many years at the southwest corner of Main street and this road, pointing the traveler's way to the aspiring village of Black Rock; hence the name of the road. The Bidwell farm was situated on the old "Gulf Road," answering to what is now Delevan avenue. This road crossed Main street just south of the bridge over Conjockety creek, and passing east, in a few rods crossed the creek bed, while, westward, it crossed a deep ravine or gulf, formed by a stream flowing from the "Jubilee Spring;" and from this circumstance obtained its name. The farm lay quite a distance west of Main street, back of the village of Black Rock; and in the burial place here set apart, interments were made from 1811 to 1825.

#### THE MATHEWS AND WILCOX GROUNDS.

Another private cemetery enterprise was set on foot by General Sylvester Mathews and Birdseye Wilcox, about 1833 or 1834. They laid out twelve acres for the purpose, on farm lot No. 30, next to the five acres which the city had purchased in 1832 for the Potter's Field. This twelve acre field was improved, and lots sold to different individuals; and as the land was more desirable than that on the corner of Delaware and North streets, there was considerable attention paid to decorations and monuments, until Forest Lawn was formally established; and then for a time but little interest appeared to be taken in this. I am happy, however, to state that a better feeling now prevails; that the grounds are carefully tended, and do not look so deserted and comfortless as they did a score of years ago.

The Hodge family purchased two lots in this place, and paid for them by furnishing and planting yellow locust trees along

the outer edge of the whole, and on each side of the walks and carriage ways. Before that, this burying ground having been originally used for agricultural purposes, was of a barren appearance, being entirely destitute of trees and shrubbery. Those locust trees were therefore at that time thought to be a very desirable acquisition, as they grew quickly. They yet remain as specimens of the taste of a former generation; yet we cannot but think what a magnificent grove the place would now have been, if graceful elms had been chosen for planting.

In 1853, the lot owners, finding that Mathews and Wilcox neglected to care for the property, opened negotiations for the purchase of the remaining rights, which was duly effected by the lot owners raising a subscription therefor; and in 1854, an association was incorporated under the name of the "Buffalo Cemetery Association." The new company paid the old proprietors the sum of \$5,000 for all their interest therein, and since that a steady improvement, as has been mentioned, has been noticeable.

#### FOREST LAWN CEMETERY.

Forest Lawn Cemetery is unquestionably the finest in this section of the state, and under the new organization will doubtless always be a permanent one. It was first laid out under the name above given, by Charles E. Clarke, Esq., in 1849, who purchased, for the purpose, of Rev. James N. Granger and his brother Warren Granger, about eighty acres of land at \$150 per acre. The grounds were planned by Mr. Clarke on a most liberal scale, and with all modern improvements.

But it having been deemed desirable that the citizens should more generally be interested in it, and that its many interests and rights should not be committed to the care of one individual, no matter how trustworthy, an organization was effected in 1855, as a private corporation, under the title of the "Forest Lawn Cemetery Association of the City of Buffalo," receiving from Mr. Clarke the possession and management of his grounds.

This company conducted the enterprise in a most creditable



and faithful manner. Numerous elegant monuments were erected, and valuable improvements made by individual owners of lots. Yet there grew up a desire for a cemetery more broadly planned, and more positively interesting and attractive; withal, a feeling that not even a private corporation could suitably hold and manage such a cemetery as was required for the prospective growth of a city like Buffalo. Accordingly on the nineteenth of November, 1864, a new organization was formed under the title of the "Buffalo City Cemetery Association," which was declared legally complete November 21st, and at once entered upon its great work. From "Forest Lawn Association" all their unsold lots were purchased, with the franchise; and then and subsequently, several adjoining tracts of different quantities, which enlarged the grounds to its present size, about two hundred and thirty acres, being all that will be required for generations. The beautiful name "Forest Lawn" is therefore now not its legal, but its popular designation—which, however, it will doubtless retain for all time to come.

It is right that attention should here be called to the fact that this is a "mutual company without stockholders," in which all of the lot owners are equally interested; in which the trustees receive no compensation or money benefit for their services, the only salaried officers being the secretary and superintendent. It should also be expressly stated that by the laws under which its managers act, they are absolutely forbidden to apply any proceeds of sales of lots (after original land debts were paid, and the expenses met of surveying and laying out the grounds) to any other purpose than the improvement, embellishment and preservation of the cemetery, for the benefit of the lot owners.

The original land debt was \$131,650. This was completely paid, together with \$51,630 and accrued interest for subsequent purchases from Dr. Lord and Dr. Ransom, in several years less time than was anticipated by the most hopeful. The entire property is therefore now, and has been for years, unen-

cumbered. Thus the lot owners, small and large alike, have an inalienable title, and a surety that their lots will be for all time kept and cared for by the Association, except the few un-commuted lots in the old park. These last, however, must eventually yield to the pressure of necessity, and come under the general management so as to have uniform care with the rest.

A few figures will here be interesting and suggestive as to the magnitude and importance of this enterprise. The original cost of its real estate was about \$185,000; expenditures to the present time over \$389,000; receipts in all ways over \$373,000; all of this being a permanent investment. Assets amount to an additional \$12,000, being money in the treasury, horses, wagons, tools, implements, &c., &c. The lot-owners are upwards of two thousand five hundred in number, aside from several thousand single graves. The individual proprietors of lots have erected monuments, tombs and mausolea, to the value of more than \$1,000,000; so that nearly or quite \$2,000,000 have been already invested in Forest Lawn. Its funds are now, and for all time will and *must* be, devoted, without the direction of a dollar to private benefit of trustees or stockholders, of which latter absorbent class there are none, to the increase and care of the grounds for the sole benefit of the lot owners interested in the cemetery.

As is well known, this cemetery is located on the Conjockety creek about two and a half miles from the Court-house Square, or the center of the business part of the city, and between Delaware and Main streets; each of which gives a noble approach. The grounds are divided about equally into forest and lawn, table and broken land, and a succession of knolls running parallel with the creek from southeast to northwest; giving a variety of approach that is not often found in similar places. It is truly by nature a lovely spot, and is exceedingly beautiful since laid out and occupied; and the extensive as well as costly improvements that have been and will be made in its vicinity, have rendered its surroundings correspondingly beautiful. The



great park adjoins it, and next are the extensive grounds of the Insane Asylum; so that a large portion of the territory drained by the Conjockety, from Main street to near the state dam across the creek, is, and always will be, public ground.

The first interment in Forest Lawn was that of John Lay, Jr., who died on the tenth day of July, 1850, aged sixty years. He was a most worthy citizen, who had been at one time distinguished for his great mercantile ability; but he went down in the crash of fortunes of 1836, and ever after lived a retired life. Early in the inception of the improvements at Forest Lawn, he visited the place, and pointed out a certain knoll where he wished to be interred when he should die; when that event occurred, the liberal-hearted proprietor donated that spot to the family. And so it came about that late one summer afternoon, July 12th, 1850, the quiet of the place was broken by the entrance of the first funereal train; and at the going down of the sun, as the earth closed over the mortal remains of John Lay, Jr., began the peopling of this new Necropolis of the Queen City of the Lakes. On that occasion were heard for the first time in this cemetery, the words of the lofty and impressive burial service of the Episcopal Church, as Mr. Lay was consigned to his final resting place, under the direction of him who had performed this office for two generations of his fellow citizens; I mean the late Mr. Loring Pierce, so many years our "city sexton." Since then, how rapidly has been fulfilled the saying of the venerable and beloved rector of St. Paul's Cathedral, who officiated at that time, and, as he surveyed the place, bethinking him of its intended purpose, exclaimed, "What a flood of grief will here be poured out;" for a continual tide of departed citizens has set thitherward. It is worthy of remark that those who first deemed it too remote and unfavorable a location, are now foremost in beautifying it, and making it a place of attraction, rather than of dread. It is *the* cemetery of Buffalo; and is especially so for all those who are not attached to the Romish or Jewish faith. To this beautiful spot, the bodies of

those interred in the village burying ground on Franklin street, were removed; many by the hands of loving kindred were laid beside others of their families; while those who were unrecognized, and had none to care for them, were interred in a place apart, and a suitable monument erected over them.

Some families have removed their dead from the Mathews and Wilcox and the Delaware and North street grounds, to Forest Lawn; also some who buried on their own lands between the city and the Plains. Of those who interred originally on their own premises, and have had the bodies removed, I mention Col. William W. Chapin, Judge Erastus Granger, John Collins, William Hodge, Benjamin Hodge, Sr., Benjamin Hodge, Jr., and Mrs. Ward Cotton. Neither the Sherwoods nor Mrs. Rudolph Atkins' family have removed their dead; those of the latter rest at the "Old Homestead" on the Plains; of the former in a private burial ground on the Sherwood farm opposite, from which all the bodies but those of the Sherwood family have been removed.

Forest Lawn contains a number of public remembrancers of the dead, as well as many private monuments and mausoleums. Among the former is a plain obelisk, erected in the center of a large square of ground containing those of the early dead who were removed from Franklin Square. On it is a suitable inscription to their memory. A beautiful shaft has also been erected to commemorate our firemen, in the new part of the ground near the head of Linwood avenue. In the old part there is a monument for Colonel Fay, an officer prominent in military affairs some thirty years ago; and another to General Bidwell, an officer killed during the civil war. Not far from them there is a memorial erected by our patriotic townsman Hon. Elbridge G. Spaulding, commemorating heroes of the Revolutionary war. These various structures are rich in material, and fine specimens of the elaborate work of the architect and sculptor.



## THE MOUND—A MYSTERY.

On the high ground of the Granger farm between Forest Lawn proper, and the old homestead of that farm, there was formerly a circular mound that contained many human bones. Here, when a boy, sixty years ago, I used to pick up bits of bones. There were then no entire ones, but a large quantity of small pieces that had been plowed over again and again. When buried, they must have had but a slight covering of earth. Among the pieces were found some entire sound teeth. Tradition said at that time that a battle had been fought near the spot, by a race of people inhabiting this country, very many years since, and long before the Senecas possessed it; as they have no knowledge of that race of people, and know nothing of how those bones came there.

## SOLDIERS' BURIAL PLACES.

It is in the memory of some yet living that the American bank of Niagara river at Black Rock and the banks of Conjockey creek adjacent, were the grounds of several hard contested battles in which many were killed and afterwards buried on the battle-field. Many also were buried here who died of sickness in the barracks of our Grand Battery and in the barracks on the bank of Conjockey creek. There is no doubt that hundreds of unknown soldiers are buried here, and as these grounds have been plowed over again and again, it is impossible to detect their individual resting places until excavations are made. There ought certainly to be some provision for reintering them when found. The remains of many are also scattered along the line of Main street from Flint Hill to the Terrace. All these grounds are thickly strewn with the relics of a former war. Bones of soldiers have been exhumed within the last few years at the junction of Lafayette and Washington streets. They have been found also on the Terrace near St. Joseph's College, on the bank of the river at Black Rock, and in various places on Main street, and have been thrown about as play-

things for "Peterkin and Wilhelmine" as mentioned by Southey in his poem, "The Battle of Blenheim." Time and the march of improvement alone can bring to light the bones of the majority of our dead soldiers, as the government was not so careful of them formerly as now.

It would, of course, be impossible for me to identify all the places in this region where our nation's dead have been buried. I may, however, point out some of the more prominent ones.

*The Terrace.*—During the war of 1812, or as it was for a long time generally styled, the "Last War," there were many soldiers, and doubtless some military attachés of the army, buried in and about the Terrace. There was a battery erected on the Terrace to defend the water approach by the channel of the creek, near the opening about the foot of Genesee street. By this approach, the wounded in the various contests of 1814 were brought to the hospital on the Terrace, and the dead of the hospital were buried near it.

I well remember, that when Church and Delaware streets were graded, many skeletons were dug up during the progress of the work; and one was in a coffin, and had military trappings on, that indicated the wearer to have been a lieutenant in the army.

*Sandy Town.*—In 1814, when our army held Fort Erie, the ferrying place across the river was near Sandy Town, which was quite a noted spot. A number of wooden houses had been built in rear of the beach, behind the immense sand hills that existed in the early part of the century. Some of them were used as hospitals for the sick and wounded as they were brought from Canada; and the dead were buried in the sand banks adjacent. Many bodies were washed out into the lake in after years. I have often seen them lying there exposed to the gaze of the passer by, and human bones were even tossed carelessly about with laugh and jest by those engaged in carting sand to Buffalo.

As late as 1830, it was a common thing for the school boys



to go there on a Saturday afternoon and dig for relics,—buttons, bullets, &c.; and often they exhumed the bones perhaps of those to whom these belonged; and frequently portions of muskets, grape-shot, and other war-like materials were dug up. But the great storm of October, 1844, washed away the sand hills and then were plainly to be seen the traces of the line of huts, the foundations of the chimneys, officers' quarters, &c. All now is changed, and we doubt if a single relic of the war could be found there.

*Conjockety Creek.*—While our Kentucky Riflemen were stationed on the south bank of Conjockety creek, in 1814, there were many graves made near by for those who sickened and died, and also for those who were killed in the battle that took place there in that year; the firing of guns in which battle, I distinctly remember hearing. There were some killed both of the British and our own men, and their bodies were buried there. Those soldier graves have all since been leveled. No mark is left to designate them.

*Black Rock.*—Many graves were on or near the premises of Col. William A. Bird, Sr. In the battle of July 11th, 1813, at Black Rock, in which Col. Bishop was killed, and Capt. Saunders was wounded and taken prisoner by our men, there were eight British and three American soldiers killed; and they were buried on the brow of the river bank, back of Col. Bird's house. From his residence south as far as Albany street, there were at the close of the war many grave-mounds, which since that time have all been leveled. In fact, I am informed by those who were there at the close of the war, that there were very few vacant lots in Black Rock, between Conjockety creek and what is now Fort Porter, that did not contain some soldiers' graves.

*The Grave in the "Park Meadow."*—Gen. Smyth's Regulars were encamped in the fall and winter of 1812, on "Flint Hill." This hill, already mentioned (page 64), is a rise of ground over which Main street passes, from the crossing of the Parkway

north to Chapin street. Its name was derived from the fact that the rock here and in the region round about comes very near to the surface, and even frequently crops out above it. Including and beyond it north-eastward were the Buffalo Plains mentioned herein (page 52 and elsewhere.) The troops of General Smyth remained at Flint Hill until the following spring. During this time, there prevailed among them a typhoid epidemic. Deprived as they were of comfortable hospitals, and a sufficient supply of medical agents, it carried off about three hundred of them. They were put into plain pine board coffins, furnished by William Hodge, Sr., and temporarily buried near the south line of the Chapin place; but the rock came so near to the surface that their graves could not be more than about a foot in depth. The ensuing spring they were removed some distance, to the north side of the farm, where the ground was a sandy loam and easily dug. Leave to bury them there being given by the respective owners of the farms, Capt. Rowland Cotton and Doctor Daniel Chapin, they were deposited directly on the dividing line between these farms, in one common grave. Doctor Chapin planted two yellow willows, one at each end of the grave, which have become large trees, and are yet growing; the grave itself remaining undisturbed to this day.

The Government ought to erect a handsome monument to their memory; and while this would commemorate these unknown soldiers, who gave up their lives in a more horrible manner than on the ensanguined battle-field, it would ornament the park, in which enclosure they are; the grave being about eighty rods north-northwest from the park stone-quarry, not far from the middle of the Park Meadow.

Dr. Chapin's place was owned and occupied by the Chapin family, from a very early day until not many years since, when it was sold to the present owner, Elam R. Jewett, Esq. The people of this city are much indebted to the Doctor, who was one of the pioneers of Buffalo, for the good taste and judgment exercised in clearing up his farm. Coming on to it in 1806,



and ever having an eye to the beauty of native scenery and landscape, he left and always preserved with care, groups and scattered trees of various sizes and kinds, where it would add to its beauty; and we in our park enjoy the benefit of his sentiment and forbearance. He was imbued with the idea of the poet who says, "Woodman, spare that tree;" and when he could, he always had trees left untouched by the ruthless axe, in order that man and beast should benefit by their shade, and they with their primitive grace ornament his beautiful farm. His son, the late Col. William W. Chapin, always protected and preserved those trees with truly reverential and pious care, in memory of and respect for his honored father, who left the inheritance of the whole farm to him on his decease. Without that inherited taste, he, like most of the early settlers, would have denuded the land of every tree; and that portion of our park would have been a barren expanse of mere farming land; for a large portion of this old farm now constitutes the most interesting part of our beautiful park. As one rides through it, especially that portion I speak of, he cannot help noticing those groups of trees and scattered monarchs of the forest within and on the borders of the extensive Park Meadow; beautiful reminders of those thoughtful and tasteful former proprietors.

In this connection it would not be right to omit a notice of the soldiers' burial place at

*Williamsville.*—About six thousand of our army raised during the first year of the war of 1812-15, and sent on to protect our frontier at Buffalo, went into winter quarters at Williamsville village, eleven miles north of Buffalo. Their encampment at that place was just north of the main road, and contiguous to the village, on the extensive premises then owned by the enterprising milling and merchant firm of Juba Storrs & Co. This ground continued to be occupied by our soldiers more or less during the war. Sickness, as is usual in camp, prevailed among them; and some two or three hundred died and were

buried on the grounds adjacent. Since then the village has spread, covering the ground where they were buried, and long since not a vestige of a grave was left to be seen. There has been no one to look after or care for their bones when exhumed, as they often were, in excavating cellars or making improvements such as are necessary in a growing village.

There were quite extensive barracks built on the bank of the Eleven Mile creek, a very healthy, eligible place; it being retired from the immediate scenes of conflict, and about one mile above the village. It continued to be our general hospital for sick and wounded soldiers during this war.

During the three years of the conflict, many of our soldiers died, and were buried at the side of a field near by. The ground that contains their remains comprises about half an acre, lying on the southwesterly side of a public road; the Eleven Mile creek running parallel and adjoining.

Two of our townsmen, Col. John Bliss and John B. Evans, feeling an interest that this ground should never be disturbed or encroached upon, procured the title by a warranty deed from the owners, John Haskel and wife, to themselves, dated August 6th, 1851, and duly recorded. They have both since deceased, leaving the title in their heirs. The number of our own soldiers buried on this ground is supposed to be three hundred or more; and in one retired corner lie nearly one hundred of our enemies who were wounded, taken prisoners and died. Many of the latter were captured at the desperate sortie the British made at Fort Erie, August 15th, 1814, and the blowing up of the magazine. There were several hundred prisoners taken at this encounter; many of them were wounded most horribly, having been blown up when the magazine exploded.

On the second day after the sortie, I saw a number of wagon loads of those blackened and maimed British soldiers, as they stopped in front of my father's house on their way to the hospital.

Recently with one of the oldest residents of the town, Hon.



T. A. Hopkins, I visited this burying place. There was not a slab or monument of any kind to be seen to designate the graves. Only the uneven hillocks mark the spot that contains the bones of our unhonored dead.

This ground is a little elevated from the surrounding land and road adjoining. On the border of two sides stand ten sugar maple trees, from one and one-fourth to two feet in diameter; all but one in a fine healthy condition. I have no doubt they were planted there by the comrades of those whose bones now occupy this ground. The tenth tree is in a state of decay, and like many of the human race is beginning to die at the top.

It is known only to a few living witnesses that this spot of ground contains the graves of some of our dead soldiers. Our Government ought to erect at this beautiful, retired place, a suitable monument to their memory, and provide for removing thither the skeletons of others, when found in excavating in the village.

*Fort Porter.*—There is a burying ground here for United States soldiers dying while stationed at Buffalo. The first interment was made in 1867. Up to February, 1878, there had been sixteen burials, all at the north corner of the ground.

It was my original intention to include in this account only the burial places which belong to the early history of our city; having especially in mind the spots where our dead soldiers have been interred. I might therefore here conclude this paper. But I have decided to make it answer more perfectly to its title, by adding such information as I could gather concerning all the burial places hitherto and now existing here, and in the immediate neighborhood, even though I might be able to give, little more, if anything, in some instances, than the name. For the information thus embodied, I am in a large measure indebted to our fellow citizen, Mr. Nicholas Ottenot, the extremely painstaking and accurate Secretary of the Ger-

man and French Catholic Cemetery at Pine Hill, and to the careful inquiries of Rev. Albert Bigelow.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CEMETERIES.

Of these there have been and are quite a number. I mention these in order of the times of opening for use.

*Old St. Louis.*—This was situated in Edward street, near Main. Burials commenced here in 1830, in ground given by Mr. Lecouteulx for the purpose. But in 1832, the city authorities prohibited them, as they had done in other cases, and the use of this ground was discontinued. The bodies were, so far as they could be discovered, removed to the then new grounds next below mentioned; and the place became the site of the priest's house.

*New St. Louis.*—Thus it is proper to distinguish the lot referred to (page 55 above) as set off from the city Potter's Field. It is situated between North and Best streets, having eighty-eight feet front on each; being a strip taken from the west part of the original five acres. It contains perhaps an acre of ground, more or less. It was opened in 1832, and closed in 1859.

*Old St. Mary's.*—This is situated on the southeast corner of Johnson and North streets. It was opened in 1845, and closed in 1860. It contains about one and one-half acres. Many bodies have been removed to the new ground at Pine Hill; though the place has not been devoted to any other purpose, and bodies are yet lying there.

*St. Francis Xavier.*—This ground is at North Buffalo (Lower Black Rock.) It was opened about 1850, and is still in use. It is situated near the crossing of Bird street by the Falls branch of the New York Central Railroad, and contains about two acres. St. John's church, North Buffalo, has also use in common of this ground.

*St. Joseph's.*—This ground is situated at Elysville on Buffalo Plains, just south of the poor-house—about five miles from the Buffalo post-office. It was opened in 1850, and is still used. It contains about six acres.



*Holy Cross.*—This cemetery is at Limestone Hill, South Buffalo, about four miles from the post-office. It was opened in 1855, and contains about eighty acres.

It is distinguished as being the Bishop's cemetery, as the title is solely in him. In this it is different from all the other Roman Catholic grounds, which are either under the State law, incorporated and held by trustees, or are owned by the various parishes whose names they bear.

This cemetery is also peculiar in that it is used exclusively for the burial of those of Irish birth.

*United German and French.*—This is used for the burial of Roman Catholics of these two nationalities, as the Holy Cross is for Irish persons. It is also a corporation under trustees, as noted in the preceding article. Besides this, it should be specially stated that somewhat as Forest Lawn has become the chief Protestant and general cemetery, into that just named have been merged all the Roman Catholic cemeteries which were within the city limits, except that at Limestone Hill. Of it, the original fourteen acres purchased in 1858, and opened in 1859 for burial purposes, are now entirely filled with graves, and the twenty-eight acres purchased nine years ago are rapidly filling up. The grounds are laid out with much skill and taste; and by a system of records of great minuteness and accuracy, followed for twenty years, the Secretary is able to give in a moment the exact place of burial, and numerous chief descriptive and identifying facts concerning every person buried within this cemetery, in that time. It contains in all forty-two acres.

Pine Hill, where this and several other cemeteries below mentioned are located, is on the direct Batavia road (New Genesee street) about a mile beyond the present city limits. It is, on the whole, a very favorable location for cemetery purposes.

#### JEWISH CEMETERIES.

*Bethel Cemetery* (Polish.)—The Bethel Society, organized in 1847, purchased in 1849 a burial place, fronting on what is now Fillmore avenue, between Batavia and Sycamore streets. The

whole lot contains three and one-half acres. They opened a portion of it only for burials.

*The Jacobson Society* (German) had previously been formed, though imperfectly organized; and had obtained the use of the above-named lot, it being then private property, for burial purposes. The first person interred here was Mrs. Elias Bernheimer, wife of the owner.

The Bethel Society, after the opening of the Pine Hill cemeteries, obtained a lot there, about two and one-half acres in extent, and in 1861 opened the ground which is now known by their name, in close proximity to the German and French cemetery.

The Jacobson Society was succeeded by the *Beth Zion*, which also purchased a burying ground at Pine Hill, and when afterwards the *Temple Society* was formed, and united with *Beth Zion* as *Temple Beth Zion*, this ground became the property of the united societies and is known as

*Temple Beth Zion Cemetery*.—This contains an area bounded by sixty feet front and four hundred and fifty feet deep, and can hardly be deemed adequate to the wants and ability of our Jewish population.

The old cemetery lot on Fillmore avenue has been sold to private parties, with express provision that the burial places shall always be kept well fenced and guarded, according to the excellent Jewish saying, "Let the dead rest."

#### MISCELLANEOUS CEMETERIES.

*Cemetery of St. John* (Pine Hill.)—This ground belongs to Lutherans. It is located on a corner of the Pine Hill and Pine Ridge roads. It contains several acres, bought in 1858. The first interment took place July 6th, 1859.

*Holy Rest or Old German Lutheran Trinity Cemetery* (Pine Hill.)—This contains three acres, and was opened in 1859.

*Zion Church Cemetery* (Pine Hill.)—This belongs to the congregation known as the German Evangelical Reformed Zion



Church. It contains four acres, and was opened about 1859.

*The Salem Evangelical Mission*, of Zion church, also occupies a part of this ground.

*Mount Hope Cemetery* (Pine Hill.)—This ground is the property of Mr. Rapin, and is appropriated to burials without respect to nationality or form of religion.

*Howard Free Cemetery* (Pine Hill.)—This is a private ground, devoted exclusively, however, to burials from the country beyond. It is not like the rest, a city burial place.

*Concordia Cemetery*.—This, as its name imports, is in fact a union ground. It is situated on Genesee street, between the New York Central and Erie Railway (Niagara Falls) crossings. It comprises fifteen acres, bought in 1858, and opened for use in 1859. The grounds are appropriated as follows:

1. *The German Evangelical St. Peter's* congregation use five acres.

2. *The German Evangelical St. Stephen's* congregation, five acres.

3. *The First German Lutheran Trinity* congregation, three acres.

4. The keeper's premises occupy the remaining two acres.

*St. Matthew's United Church Cemetery*.—This is located on Clinton street, near the Sulphur Springs Orphan Asylum. It is pleasantly situated, having a creek on its northern side, diversifying the view; and the ground is well laid out and kept, being planted with fir and shade trees. It contains ten acres, and was opened in 1875.

*German Methodist Cemetery*.—This belongs to the Black Rock German Evangelical M. E. Church, North Buffalo. It is situated on Bird street, and contains about five and one-quarter acres. It was opened in 1870.

*Reservation Cemetery*.—This is the old Indian church burying ground, on the continuation of Seneca street, and has within the general enclosure, of which it forms a part, the grave of the celebrated Indian Chief, Red Jacket. This chief, contrary

to his own decidedly expressed will, was buried with Christian rites; his wife being a Christian woman. Only his grave, however, is now in this cemetery, for his remains were removed to the Cattaraugus Reservation, in 1852, and the exact place where they lie is known only to his own descendants. It is to be hoped that before long, as all objections on the part of his people have been removed, a suitable place will be furnished for their reception in Forest Lawn. His grave-stone, erected by the actor, Henry Placide, is now among the relics possessed by the Buffalo Historical Society.

As now, in conclusion, we glance over the past seventy-five years, and sweep the eye around our present city, within the circuit of five or six miles from the post-office, what strange thoughts are awakened! In that time nearly three generations have passed away; and while now one hundred and fifty thousand people dwell upon the surface, we may almost literally say that the ground occupied by these busy multitudes is, or has been, well nigh everywhere, a burial place for the dead. How true become to us the words of Solomon, and how impressive the lessons which they suggest:

“One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh,  
but the earth abideth forever.”

And as we turn from our visit to the great City of the Dead, let us the more reverently cherish their memory, and, emulating their virtues, while avoiding their errors, seek to be ready, so that when “our summons comes,” we may each

“Approach the grave  
As one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.”





## ODE.

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READ AT THE DEDICATION OF FOREST LAWN CEMETERY,  
SEPTEMBER 28, 1866.

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BY REV. JOHN C. LORD, D. D.

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PLACE for the dead—

Not in the noisy city's crowd and glare,  
By heated walls and dusty streets, but where  
The balmy breath of the free summer air  
Moves murmuring softly o'er the new-made grave,  
Rustling among the boughs which wave  
Above the dwellers there.

Rest for the dead—

Far, far from the turmoil and strife of trade,  
Let the broken house of the soul be laid,  
Where the violets blossom in the shade,  
And the voices of Nature do softly fall  
Over the silent sleepers all—  
Where rural graves are made.

Room for the dead—

Away from the crowded and ghastly caves,  
Where the dead lie heap'd and the thick strewn graves  
Do jostle each other like following waves—



In the place where earth's broad bosom yields  
Room for the dead, in woods and fields,  
Which dying nature craves.

Place for the dead—  
In the quiet glen where the wild vines creep,  
And the desolate mourner may wait and weep,  
In some silent place, o'er the loved who sleep;  
Nor sights, nor sounds profane, disturb their moan—  
With God and with the dead alone—  
“Deep calleth unto deep.”

Rest for the dead—  
Away from all walls—where the wild bird sings,  
And the hurrying cloud its shadow flings  
O'er streamlet and rock, where the ivy clings  
To the ancient oak—the dead should lie,  
Till on the ear of death the cry  
Of final judgment rings.

Peace for the dead—  
After life's warfare let the dead repose  
Where no levies are made—no usurer goes,  
No taxes, no debts, no pecuniary woes,  
To transfer to strangers the sanctified ground  
Which the wayworn and weary have happily found—  
Where Lethe, waveless, flows.

Homes for the dead—  
Where the kindred who dwell together here,  
May guard their own Necropolis, and rear  
The Household Marble—as the sombre bier  
Brings each departed to the destined home—  
Let the name be graven on the stone—  
To memory ever dear.

Room for the dead—  
The living wait their doom, the gay, the strong,  
The beautiful, together soon must throng  
The doors of death, and they who mourn, ere long,  
Must lie with kindred dust, and, soon or late,  
All pass the ever open gate—

Room—room, Oh! give them room!



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# THE BRAVES' REST;

OR,

## THE OLD SENECA MISSION CEMETERY.

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COMMUNICATED TO THE SOCIETY.

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BY WILLIAM C. BRYANT.

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THERE are few sights more saddening, more humbling to human pride, than one of those neglected graveyards occasionally found in the suburbs of our American cities. It is usually a wild, unkempt field, dotted with sunken graves—graves hidden in a riotous growth of weeds, tangled vines and briars—graves marked by stained and fractured slabs of marble rudely sculptured, and either prostrate or tottering to their fall—graves tramped and defiled by grazing cattle—graves enclosed by rotting and dilapidated fences—graves which reproach and beseech us with the mute eloquence of things holy and precious, when they are fallen into neglect and decay.

The friends of the dead who so long ago were tenderly laid to rest there, are either themselves dead or have drifted far away; and among the new and busy generation which has succeeded them there is found no pious hand to plant flowers or trail vines about the tombs—no Old Mortality to scrape away the lichens from the record of the graver's chisel—no Good Samaritan to lift into position the fallen slab, or even to replace the broken picket which shut out the four-footed vandals, and the more cruel and wanton gamins of the street. The din and roar of



the great city comes faintly swelling on the ear; but these lowly sleepers are not more heedless of the life surging through its streets, than are the living toilers there oblivious of the memory of the dead pioneers who helped to lay broad and deep its foundations.

We have had several such neglected graveyards in the suburbs of Buffalo. The expansion of the city has swept some of them away, but one or two remain; and one, the most venerable and interesting of all, the old Mission burial ground, four miles east of Main street. Buffalo was but a hamlet when the missionaries first planted the banner of the cross on this holy spot. Near by was the principal village of the Senecas. In close proximity was the grand council-house, which often resounded to the eloquent tones of Farmers' Brother and Red Jacket; the latter of whom long but ineffectually strove to prevent the introduction of Christianity among his people. The name Buffalo Creek is often used in our earlier annals to designate the place where important treaties were held and war parties formed in the olden time. But long before the advent of the white man, and during the period of aboriginal sovereignty, it was one of the most important points on the continent. An ancient race called the Kah-Kwahs erected their bark houses on the banks of the creek, and hunted the deer through the forests at this extremity of Lake Erie. Still earlier, a mysterious tribe called the Eries claimed sovereignty over this territory. Both of these tribes in turn were exterminated by the fierce and warlike Iroquois or Six Nations, of which league the Senecas were the most powerful member. Until a few years since a large mound,\* close to the old cemetery, filled with the bones of slain Kah-Kwahs, remained a monument to the prowess of the Senecas. But there were other remains still more interesting to the antiquarian and archæologist. The old cemetery occupied the site of one of those ancient circular forts whose origin has

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\* See *Buffalo Cemeteries*, ante, p. 64, for reference to a similar mound.

given rise to so much speculation and controversy. Twenty years ago the intrenchments were plainly discernible, but the plow and the spade have now obliterated the last trace of them. A diagram of this ancient intrenchment can be found in Schoolcraft's "Notes on the Iroquois," and it is noticed in other kindred works.

Our old settlers, the boys of fifty years ago, preserve a vivid recollection of what they saw in the old Indian villages scattered along Buffalo creek from the locality of the cemetery to near the present village of Aurora. Men like Hon. Orlando Allen can remember when, on the occasion of the arrest of Tommy Jemmy by the whites, on the charge of murder, the town swarmed with scowling warriors. They remember how the Indians gathered on Ellicott Square were aroused to a pitch of frenzy by the fierce arraignment of the pale-faces by Red Jacket; how the stoutest hearts began to quail at the thought of an Indian massacre, and how the noble sachem, Captain Pollard, scarcely inferior to Red Jacket as an orator, replied to that chief, and stilled the tumultuous waves of passion by his eloquence.

The old Indian village was a favorite place of resort to the truant school boy; and to the good boys likewise who had the freedom of a holiday, forty or fifty years ago. It was a rare treat to behold the mystic sacrifice of the white dog; to see the dusky maidens and stalwart warriors engaged in the monotonous, but not ungraceful, measures of the strawberry dance; to behold the mysteries of the green-corn festival and other pagan ceremonies. We call them "pagan," but the Senecas worshipped, as we do, the one great and good Spirit, the Creator and Sovereign of the universe. Not rarely was it the good fortune of the boys aforesaid, to be spectators at one of those exciting ball plays between the picked youth of rival tribes, naked to the waist, plumed and painted, and withal marvelously agile, expert and graceful. How we admired their proud bearing; their dark, flashing eyes, gleaming through a mask of paint,



and their lithe, Apollo-like forms. If nothing was going on to interrupt the lazy current of Indian life, there was still enough queer and phenomenal about it to interest the pale-faced spectator; to see the squaws pounding samp with the primitive pestle and mortar, or engaged in their rude husbandry; while their little wind-rocked papposes swung from the branches of a tree; to watch the lazy fisherman bending over his bark canoe to catch a glimpse of bass or pickerel, or the Indian boy scouting along the edge of the woods, bow and arrow in hand, in quest of feathered trophies. If it were winter, and a firm crust was on the snow, one never tired of seeing the Indian youth propel the snow-snakes. Heads erect, as if in anger, with what amazing velocity these wooden serpents would glide along; and woe to the reckless wight whose foot opposed their career; it would be long ere he was afforded another holiday. And then, O boy of forty years ago, what strange intimacies we formed; what queer friendships with our Seneca playmates! How they taught us to ensnare the birds and squirrels; how they confided to us the secret hiding place of the furry and feathered denizens of the woods—where the ripe red strawberry gemmed the meadows, where the blueberries and the luscious Indian plums hung their sweets. How with them we chased and mounted the saucy, incorrigible little Indian ponies; and—confess it with a heart throb—how persistently we essayed to win from the shy, black eyes of the Seneca girls one look of favor, and how we loved to listen to their soft, gleeful laughter and the music of their speech. The admixture of races had developed in some of these Indian girls the highest type of beauty. There was in the countenances of these half-caste maidens a painful, wounded, yet disdainful look, that was very touching, and reminded one of Powers' statue of the Greek slave. The Anglo-Saxon intellect, refinement and delicacy asserted themselves, even though in barbaric bonds.

A grand Indian council was a great event in those days. When the weather was fair, and in the season of blossoms, the

council fire was frequently lighted in the open air. The painting by Stanton entitled "The Trial of Red Jacket," chromo-copies of which can be found in all our art stores, gave a very good idea of the scenery in the vicinity of the council house. The artist made a study of the scene, I believe, in his early days. One of these councils called together the bulk of the nation. Groups of gaily dressed squaws, of stern and stalwart warriors, were scattered about the grove with a look of sober expectancy on their swarthy faces. Subordinate chiefs, in all the pomp of paint and feathers, flitted about the scene, but nothing could exceed the air of grandeur, of sublime indifference to all mundane affairs, with which the great sachems stalked through the silent and respectful crowd.

A friend told me that when a boy he attended a council convened to listen to the overtures of the Ogden Land Company, who sought to purchase the Indian title to this region. Wandering curiously from one picturesque group to another, my informant relates that he came across a noble looking chief, elegantly costumed, but stretched at full length under a wide-spreading tree. His head rested upon his elbow, and one hand was employed in separating into two piles a bundle of small sticks, while his lips moved as if he were rehearsing some part of a drama. It was Red Jacket recounting the heads of his great speech. The agent, or spokesman, of the Land Company was an able, adroit and eloquent man, but his oratory was far less effective than that of the Indian. "I was struck," said the narrator, "with the exordium of each. The white speaker made no allusion to a Supreme Being or a protecting Providence. The Indian commenced, with his arms outstretched towards heaven, thanking the Great Spirit for sparing their lives, and surrounding them with so many mercies. Then, turning to the agent of the land speculator with a look of withering scorn, and in tones deep and measured, he said: 'I told you six years ago never to ask the Senecas to bargain away their country while Red Jacket lived, and Red Jacket stands before you!'"



Then there was the little mission church. It was a treat to go there on a Sunday and hear the gospel as it is in English, transmuted into the language of the woods; to hear the bird-like voices of the young choir, and to witness the devout air of the little crowd of worshippers. The interpreter was a white captive taken somewhere in Pennsylvania during the Revolutionary war when he was a little child. His little sister managed to escape, but all the family save himself and her, fell victims to the tomahawk. He was adopted into an Indian family and kept in ignorance of his origin until he had arrived at manhood. Then an irresistible impulse urged him to revisit the scenes of his childhood, and look upon the face of his long-lost sister. With such information as the Indians could impart he set out on foot on his long journey through the wilderness, which stretched from Buffalo creek to the Pennsylvania settlements. He found his sister at last, the mistress of a beautiful home, surrounded by her children. He watched her movements and listened to her tones with a yearning heart, while the bread she gave the famished wanderer almost choked him. Then, without disclosing his identity, and with a heavy heart, he retraced his steps to the home of his adopted people. His sister lived and was happy; he would not reveal to her the sad fate of her brother, whom her fancy pictured as an angel in heaven, rather than as a barbarian of the woods.

We were always sure to meet among the little throng of reverent worshippers such men as Seneca White, Deacon Two-Guns, Captain Pollard and Young King. Pollard was a tall, benevolent-looking old man, with features and complexion approaching the type of Southern Europe. He was a man literally "without guile." Who that ever heard him pray and exhort in that little chapel, and witnessed his gentle, blameless life, could believe that he was a fierce warrior in Revolutionary days, and one of the leaders in the massacre of Wyoming! Young King was a very Goliath in bulk and stature; his face seamed with scars, the rim of his ears slit with a knife and pen-

dent to his shoulders, one arm gone and the other crippled, and yet as noble looking as a dethroned and battered Colossus. Red Jacket was never seen in church until the missionaries brought his dead body there. Chief Stevenson was always there. I can see him now—his long, dark, waving hair sweeping to his shoulders—his pensive and Raphael-like face. Stevenson was a half-breed, his mother a Seneca princess, his father a colonial military officer. When the Senecas decided to cast their fortunes with the British, at the opening of the Revolutionary war, his mother was constrained by her fierce and jealous relatives to abandon the hated offspring in the woods, near Cayuga Lake; and the agonized parent, with the rest of her family, was hurried to the British post, Fort Niagara. Her poor babe, but little more than three years old, wandered for two days in the woods, subsisting on such wild berries as chance threw in his way. When almost famished, a kind Providence directed the poor child's steps to a rude hut on the banks of the lake, which was the home of an Indian recluse—a Penobscot hunter who had wandered far from the home of his tribe in the wilds of Maine. This kind old man took the child into his cabin, fed and nourished him, taught him to fish and hunt, and treated him with fatherly kindness. When the long and dreary war was over, the babe, grown to be a handsome stripling, took an affectionate leave of his adopted father, and wandered back to Buffalo creek, where he was soon clasped in the arms of his delighted and weeping mother.

We have almost forgotten the existence of our old neighbors—our predecessors in the proprietorship of this beautiful region—and what we owe them. We have forgotten that when the tocsin of war rang out along this frontier, Farmer's Brother, Young King, Little Billy and their warriors volunteered their services to their white brothers, and fought bravely in several hotly-contested battles. The British set the example of employing savage warriors, and the atrocities of the River Raisin and Fort Miami are an indelible stain on the British arms.



We can scarcely realize to-day the horror and fear inspired by these ruthless allies of King George. Our Senecas met these savages at Chippewa, and so effectually chastised them that they could never again in any considerable numbers be persuaded to take the war-path against the Yankees. To the glory of our Senecas, be it said, they took no scalps, mangled or killed no wounded prisoner, and conducted themselves with as much moderation and humanity as their blue-coated allies. Even Red Jacket, never renowned as a warrior, freely exposed his life, and fought bravely on this occasion.

Yes, let us forget the Senecas. The remnants of them which survive are no longer our neighbors. All are gone. How we robbed them of their Reservation—let us forget that, too, if we can. The Quakers, and occasionally some historian, will let out the dreadful secret, but the masses care little for the red man or his wrongs. The Indian stands no longer in the path of progress. The great city, year by year, expands and reclaims a portion of his hunting grounds. Soon the sites of the old council house and mission, the homes of Red Jacket, the captive Mary Jemison, Pollard and Young King, will be covered by busy manufactories or marts of traffic. Where the “Cicero of the wilds” declaimed to a grave and dignified concourse of blanketed sachems and warriors, ward politicians will discuss, over foaming mugs of lager, schemes of plunder, or devise new ways to thwart the popular will; and the city will grow; men will wax rich and die, and be forgotten; law and philanthropy will grapple, as if in a death struggle, with the irrepressible forces of vice and squalor and crime, and some cynic will by and by wonder if, after all, the children of the woods were not as wise and happy as we.

The old mission church, for years degraded to the office of a barn, has at last been torn down. Near by was the dwelling of the captive, Mary Jemison, and within sight was Red Jacket's cabin. Both have long since disappeared. A few logs and a heap of stones mark the locality of the old council house.

The old Hebrew cemetery at Newport was deemed a fitting theme for Longfellow's muse; but the old Mission burial ground of Buffalo is voiceful of greater pathos and a more thrilling story. It is connected with the history of a wronged and nearly extinct race. It is the only memorial of their presence which the ancient lords of the soil have left us. There in their dreamless slumber repose the stern warriors of the wilderness—a long line of forest chieftains, braves and sages. There sleep in their forgotten graves, and side by side with their dusky neophytes, the patient and self-denying missionaries and their families. There lies the faithful warrior who guided the youthful Washington on his mission to Fort Du Quesne; and there, too, reposes many a captive, the narrative of whose life surpasses the wildest dream of romance. When the proud heart of Red Jacket was stilled in death,—when the far-famed captive, the “White Woman,” died with the prayer her murdered mother taught her in infancy on her aged lips, this holy ground received them into its bosom. Every foot of its surface has been watered with tears wrung from hearts that were breaking. Let us spare this ancient graveyard. It has been consecrated by the prayers of many whose lives were saintly and beautiful, and who now wear the white robes and the crown of glory. It belongs to a romantic era, tearful with the pathos of the retiring red men, and shining with the heroism of advancing pioneers. Oh, Mr. Stettenbenz! Oh, Mr. Mahoney!\* whichever, Teuton or Celt, the unsympathetic and blind goddess decrees to be the lord of our public grounds, be merciful and be pleased to spare this ancient and historic burial-ground!

“But ah! what once has been shall be no more;  
The groaning earth in travail and in pain  
Brings forth its races, but does not restore,  
And the dead nations never rise again.”

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\*This sketch was written some years ago, during the pendency of a law suit which was to determine the rival claims of Mr. Stettenbenz and Mr. Mahoney to the office of street superintendent.  
W. C. B.





# THE OLD BLACK ROCK FERRY.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, DECEMBER 14, 1863.

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BY CHARLES D. NORTON.\*

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THE Ferry which had its landing-place at the foot of the highway now called Fort street, is the oldest institution in this city; and it is proper that its history should be written, in part performance of that duty which this Society has assumed, and owes to the community. From public documents and the laws of our State, much of it has been collected; more of it from the testimony of the early settlers on this part of the Niagara frontier; and beyond the point to which their own recollection extends, they have furnished me with facts, which they gathered from men who, at a much earlier period, found their way to the Niagara river.

The Old Ferry was, it is believed, a crossing-place at a period as early as the Revolutionary war; but whatever estimate may be placed upon the authority cited for this statement, the evidence of its existence in 1796 is clear and incontrovertible. By this passage many of the early settlers of Canada journeyed to their western homes; and over it the first emigrants into Michigan were carried, on their pilgrimage to found a new State. That part of our city formerly known as the vil-

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\* Died, April 12th, 1867.



lage of Black Rock, is on historic ground; and the most exciting events which are on record, concerning our earlier days, transpired there. At the risk of a digression from my subject, let me refer to a few of them in a brief manner, more as a hint to others for their collection and preservation, than for the purpose of detailed narrative.

On the high hill or bluff, which overlooked the ferry, old Fort Adams, or Battery Swift, was situated. There is now, in the office of the Niagara Street Railroad Company, a box of balls, bullets and other implements of war, which were found in the soil by those digging for the foundation of the depot-building. The *Maryland Gazette*, of December 22d, 1763, contains an account of a battle between a detachment of English soldiers, who were moving from Fort Schlosser toward Detroit, and a body of Indians, whom they encountered at the foot of Lake Erie. The skeletons of Indians (arranged in the form of a circle, with their feet toward the center, and placed against a large iron kettle, their heads resting on hatchets, and forming the circumference of the circle), found by Col. Bird while preparing the ground for his present residence,\* show that this was the burial place of Indians killed in battle; and afford presumptive evidence that this was the scene of the engagement.

A skirmish between the American and British troops occurred at the junction of Niagara and Sixth streets, which resulted in the death of Colonel Bishop, who commanded the enemy's party; and the same foray came near depriving us of the services of General Porter, who barely escaped capture as the enemy passed up the road to attack Fort Adams. They marched toward the residence of the General, which was upon the site occupied by the old Thayer tavern, where the Rev. Mr. Robie now resides,† and would have taken him prisoner had not his housekeeper, discovering the advance guard, aroused him from sleep, and enabled him to hasten, half-clad, into the woods.

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\*Col. William A. Bird died, August 19th, 1878.

†On Niagara St., near Auburn.

Below this place, at the mouth of the Scoijoiquoides creek, a part of Commodore Perry's fleet was fitted out under the superintendence of Henry Eckford, afterwards renowned at home and abroad as a naval constructor; and near by, upon the bank, the battle of Black Rock was fought, at about the same period of time.

While I am thus indulging in a ramble away from my subject, the opportunity shall be improved of submitting to this Society the task of discovering the true orthography of the name of this stream; whether it is Scoijoiquoides, Scajaquada, Scajaquadies, Conjocketty, Conjecitors, Unnekugua or Unnekuguddies creek; for I have found the name written in these various ways.

It must not be forgotten that in Breckenridge street, near the old brick church, General Scott planted his cannon to cover the British armed vessels which were in the stream, prepared to attack the miniature but historical steamboat *Caroline* on her passage up the river during the so-called Patriot war.

It will thus be seen that the ground at the old ferry, and in its immediate vicinity, is replete with historical interest.

But I now return to my immediate subject, the history of The Old Ferry.

Captain James Sloan, a resident of Black Rock, who is well known as a man of great intelligence and integrity, and who has contributed largely to our local history in articles scattered through the columns of the city journals, came to the ferry in the year 1810. The ground now occupied by the Niagara Street Railroad buildings, was or had been an Indian field; for it was cleared and leveled, and on the south and east was bounded by a dense forest.

This venerable gentleman, who recollects with accuracy and relates with precision his early adventures in the West, full of stirring incident and exploit, speaks with enthusiasm of the view which opened to his sight, when he for the first time stood



upon this old field. The majestic Niagara, with an unbroken expanse, bore its affluent flood to the cataract, between banks covered with the primeval forest, indented with the scattered huts of the settlers on the Canada shore; and gave to view, on its tolerant bosom, the wooded islands which, in a bygone age, it had torn away from the protecting embrace of the main land. Under Fort Erie the British fleet, commanded by Commodore Barclay, was anchored; while a few batteaux were moving sluggishly up the stream, laden with salt. These constituted the commercial marine of the river, the principal business of which was the transportation of this commodity from Porter & Barton's dock, at old Fort Schlosser, to their warehouse at Black Rock, or their wharf under the lee of Bird Island, to be conveyed thence to Erie, then the principal commercial port on our lake. There are but few persons now living who know anything of the lake and river commerce from the year 1805 to the commencement of the last war with England. It consisted mainly in the transportation of salt between the places and over the route I have mentioned, to be conveyed to Pittsburg.

Four or five vessels were engaged in this business on the river, each carrying from one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and fifty barrels of salt, owned by Porter, Barton & Co.; their proprietors residing at Black Rock and Syracuse. When the wind was blowing down the lake, the vessels running from Black Rock to Erie were frequently wind-bound at the former place for a long time; and then and there would grow an accumulation of five or six thousand barrels of salt, which were piled in tiers upon the shore of the river, under the bank, and remained stored in this way until they could be carried to Erie. "The Black Rock" was the great salt exchange; and the witnesses upon whose statements I narrate these facts say that it was not a rare occurrence for the Rock to be covered with traders from Pittsburg, captains of vessels and boatmen, who met there to talk about business and interchange views. The Black Rock was a sort of commercial center for the salt mer-

chants in those early days; and the old tavern was quite as distinguished along the frontier as the Fifth Avenue and St. Nicholas are in our time.

Two roads led to the ferry from the main Batavia road. The old Indian trail or path, which was the traveled way for the Indians going between the Genesee and Grand rivers, diverged at what was then known as the Four Mile creek, and pursuing the present route of Bouck street, came upon the river bank at what is now Fort street. The other road, called the Guide Board Road, from the old cross-board at Main street pointing out its direction, crossed Main street, and followed York street to St. Joseph's College; thence south-westerly into Niagara street. It will be noticed that St. Joseph's College forms an angle with North street, and does not front upon it. The cause of this is seen at once in the former route of the Guide Board Road, which ran directly in front of the building and joined the present Niagara street, at the residence of F. C. Hill, long known as the old Callender place.\* Niagara street had been surveyed, and the trees to some extent cleared off; but for the most part it was an impassable swamp, disagreeable to travel. It was rendered comfortable, in a very slight degree, at a later period, by a corduroy road, which old residents will recollect. The traveled road to Buffalo was by way of the ferry, under the bluff, to the lake shore, and then along the broad, hard and level beach to the Terrace. Four or five years ago there lived at Wind Mill Point, in Canada, a very aged man by the name of Silas Carter. He had been a soldier in the American army during the Revolution, and while it was encamped at Morristown, he was in some capacity attached to the immediate family of Washington. When he died, his age was an hundred years; and though he married at seventy-five years of age, he left behind him three children of the marriage, who are now living and have families. He was

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\* Niagara street, near the Reservoir.



well known to Captain Sloan, who vouches for his intelligence and veracity. Carter told him that there was a crossing-place at the Old Ferry when he came into the country before the Revolutionary war closed; and that it was the only such place above the Falls. He spoke of it as a ferry, though no legally established ferry existed there until a later date. In 1796, it was well known as a ferry or crossing-place. In 1800, Augustus Porter, then of Canandaigua, had a contract with the government for carrying the mail to Fort Niagara, and he says that his route was from Canandaigua over the road to the ferry, and then down the Canada shore to Fort Niagara. Gen. Timothy A. Hopkins, late of Williamsville, in this county, once said that he raised the first wheat grown on the Holland Purchase, in a field ten miles east of Clarence; and that he carried that wheat in a wagon, drawn by three yoke of oxen, over the ferry at Black Rock, to Street's Mills at the Falls; and complained of the charge for ferriage, which was twenty shillings each way. Dr. Dwight, once President of Yale College, mentions the ferry, and says, in his "Journey Through the State of New York," that his party crossed it without inconvenience, though with much fatigue to the boatmen. A writer in the *Port Folio*, a literary periodical published in New York in 1810, in his account of a "Ride to Niagara," says that he came to Miller's Ferry, along the bank of the lake; and notices the old route by way of Bouck street as "a short way to the ferry, if there be no object in going to Buffalo." The narrative proceeds:

"The stone which bounds the river line is a mass of black chert. I arrived about twelve o'clock, M.; the ice was so thick in the River Niagara, that it was impossible to cross until three o'clock, P. M. There were three wagons of emigrants waiting to cross to the British side, from Schoharie, in New York state, and Buffaloe, in Northumberland county, Pennsylvania. They were chiefly Germans. They expected about two hundred acres of land to cost them fifty dollars. I understand the British Government sell it at forty dollars per two hundred acres. The crossing here is three-quarters of a mile wide; half a dollar for man and horse. They catch abundance of fish with a seine. The family were dining on pickerel and salmon trout, each four and a half pounds weight."

This will be sufficient to show the importance of the ferry, and the large extent of the business done there early in this century. In fact, the business at the ferry, and the peculiar advantages of the vicinage, as a site for a village or town, alarmed Joseph Ellicott; for in 1802, he wrote to Paul Busti, general agent of the Holland Land Purchase, saying:

“The State, at the last Legislature, had passed an act, providing for the purchase of the Indian possessory right to these lands, the southern part of which reached New Amsterdam;”

adding:

“There is a situation on the lands equal to or better than that of New Amsterdam for a town; so that if the State offers the land for sale this summer, before New Amsterdam gets into operation, much of time will be lost to the future prosperity of the place.”

“New Amsterdam” was then the name of the Buffalo Creek settlement; and the southern extremity of the Indian lands, of which he speaks, was a point in the late south village of Black Rock, which, it will be remembered, once comprehended all that part of the old city situated between the State Reservation line and the Niagara river; this line meeting the river at the foot of Genesee street.

The landing-place on the Canada side of the river was always at the present site; and the earliest name I can find among the ferrymen is that of Gilmore. He was a man of good family, who had fled from Pennsylvania into Canada, to escape punishment for some political riot or fight in which he had become involved. Captain Sloan knew him sixty years ago, when he lived on the Monongahela river, and says that he was a highly respectable man, and amassed property in Canada, owning a farm at Waterloo; but that his houses and barns were burned during the war, and he himself returned to Pennsylvania. Windnecker (or Windecker) was ferryman for a time, and then Hardison, whose widow perhaps some of you may know; an aged woman, who resides at Fort Erie. The ferry afterwards passed into the hands of Mr. Warren and Colonel Kirby; the



latter of whom was a notorious character on the frontier during the war, and up to the time of his death made it his business to protect His Britannic Majesty's rights, and see to it that they were not trenched upon by the democrats over the river.

We come now to the landing upon our side. Here one Con. O'Niel was the ferryman at a very early day, living by "the black rock," in a hut, which was at once his ferry house, and home. In the year 1800, there was a tolerable road over the site of the present Fort street, leading to the river margin over a flat or plateau of land about two hundred feet in width. Upon the northern extremity of this plateau there was a black rock, in shape an irregular triangle, projecting into the river; having a breadth of about one hundred feet at the north end, and extending southward and along the river for a distance of three hundred feet, gradually inclining to the south-east, until it was lost in the sand. The rock was four or five feet high, and at its southern extremity it was square, so that an eddy was formed there into which the ferry boat could be brought, and where it would be beyond the influence of the current. From this rock, teams could be driven into the boat, over a connecting lip or bridge. The natural harbor, thus formed, was almost perfect, and could not have been made, by the appliances of art, a more complete dock or landing-place for a boat. In fact, no other part of our river or shore above the Falls afforded such facility for a crossing-place. The river was narrow at this point, and the landing safe. These facts create a presumption in favor of the statement that it was the old and common point for crossing the river.

This rock was a well-known spot, and had long been a fishing-ground for the Indians. It is said that the herring came to the rock in such numbers, that a barrel full of them was thrown on it with three casts of a large net. Near the rock, and south of it, upon the river margin, was a plain or field which was used by the Indians when they held their sports or practiced their games; while the wooded height above afforded to them

a kitchen and dormitory. In a few years, quite a hamlet grew up around the black rock; but it was not until the year 1810 or 1811, that any buildings were erected on the site of the present village. When Mr. Lester Brace first visited the rock, in 1807, there were no buildings in the vicinity, except the Porter, Barton & Co. warehouse, which has before been spoken of as being at the foot of Breckenridge street; a house which Nathaniel Sill had built on Auburn street, and a log hut on the site of Albany street. The place was then called "the Black Rock Ferry;" and it is consistent with the facts stated, to suppose that it was so called from the rock, of which some description has been given. This was not only a conspicuous mark, but a well-established business point on the river, at which the crossing-place or ferry had been for many years; and doubtless gave its name to the ferry and to the hamlet which afterwards sprung up at that place, not a trace of which now exists.\*

In 1802, the Legislature passed an act which provided for the negotiation of a treaty with the Seneca Indians, the object of which was the extinguishment of the Indian title to the Mile Strip Reservation on the Niagara river. This act recognizes the existence of a ferry at this place; for it provides that the treaty to be negotiated should not prejudice the right of The People of the State of New York to the ferry across the Niagara river. To this act Mr. Ellicott refers in his letter to Mr. Busti, in which he expresses some apprehension that the future town would be located at Black Rock. The language of the act implies by fair construction an existing and prescriptive right, vested in The People of the State of New York, to a ferry at Black Rock; and to have created that right, twenty years previous-continued existence would have been necessary. If this right was thus recognized by the State, it will sustain Carter's statement that the ferry existed during the Revolutionary war. By the treaty of 1802, made with the Indians under this act,

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\* See *Addenda*, pp. 110-112.



their right to use this crossing place at Black Rock is fully protected, and the tract of land bordering on the river, one mile wide, running from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, is ceded to the State. The first statutory provision affecting the ferry, authorized the commissioners of the land office to lease it, with one hundred acres of land, on such terms as they might deem proper, for the period of eight years; reserving the right of the Indians in accordance with the treaty. This statute does not refer to the one hundred acres now known as the ferry lot, on the south side of which the present ferry is established. This tract is north of the old ferry a quarter of a mile or more, and was conveyed in 1815 to Gen. Peter B. Porter, to whom it was offered as a gift; but he refused to accept the title without making compensation to the State. I have noticed for some time past that the stone monument which denotes the south line of the ferry lot upon the easterly side of Niagara street, has been misplaced and lies upon the street. It could now without difficulty be restored, and a survey I suppose would be necessary; but it should be done at once to save future trouble in establishing the course of that line. In 1806 the ferry was leased or directed to be leased to Alexander Rea, but I cannot find that he ever availed himself of his privilege; for Major Frederick Miller appears to have taken possession of the ferry in that year, and to have retained it until 1812. During the interval the business of the ferry was steadily growing, for there was an emigration to Canada that increased up to the commencement of the war. The rivalry between the proprietors of the Holland Purchase, or rather their agents, and the agents of the Canadian government, was vigorously conducted; and the representations of the latter to the prejudice of the Holland Purchase, succeeded in turning considerable emigration across the river. In 1812, Mr. Orange Brace became the lessee of the ferry; but that was an exceedingly dull year. Very little business was done on the frontier after war was declared.

I have said before that Mr. Lester Brace visited the ferry in 1807. It will be unnecessary to say more of him than that he was the son of Orange Brace, one of the hardy and resolute men who came to Western New York from New England in 1790; and to show that the father was a man eminently fitted to be a pioneer of civilization in the West, it will be sufficient to say that in December, 1790, he returned to Connecticut on foot, with Judge Augustus Porter, and traveled a portion of the journey on snow shoes. Mr. Lester Brace left Bennington in what is now Wyoming county, with an ox team and wagon, accompanied by some neighbors, to visit the frontier on business; and crossing the Indian Reservation his party were overtaken in the woods by a severe snow storm which drove them under their wagon for shelter, and compelled them to remain there all night. Pursuing their journey, they reached Landon's tavern, now the Mansion House, and turning into Commercial street they traveled by way of the creek and the lake beach, down to Major Miller's tavern at the old ferry. It was filled with sailors and river boatmen who were holding high revel when Mr. Brace arrived; and the landlord, unable to keep them in order by gentle means, was administering such rude justice as the occasion demanded, and the manners of frontiersmen amply justified and required. In the general *melée* Mr. Brace's friends fled, seeking other quarters; but he sought the top of a whisky barrel in one corner of the room, on which he remained until morning.

At this time there was at the ferry a house and tavern, with some other buildings, making a promising settlement. There were no other houses at Black Rock except a hut near the brook at Albany street; the Porter, Barton & Co. warehouse, and the residence of Nathaniel Sill. Of this brook I shall be glad to preserve recollection. It was a pretty stream, coming from the forest; and it meandered between wooded banks to Niagara street, where it rushed over a broken ledge of rocks in a miniature fall, and poured its crystal water into the un-



grateful Niagara. A few years ago this laughing stream was turned into a sewer, and now mingles its turbid and muddy waters with the Erie canal.

Major Miller's lease for an unexpired term of ten years was transferred to Orange Dean and Holden Allen; the latter of whom raised a family of stalwart boys, who became sailors and lake captains. Capt. Levi Allen, of this city, with two of his brothers, are survivors of this family.

Doubtless, there are many facts which have escaped my observation that would have rendered this history more interesting. The men who lived upon the frontier at that time possessed many admirable qualities. They were bold, accustomed to danger, self-reliant, fertile in resources and full of that rude energy which clears up the forests, lays the foundation of towns and makes way for a more refined civilization which, if it has more of the graces of life, has less real energy and practical sense. It is certainly desirable that sketches of these men should be preserved; for the early history of New York is to be found in the narratives of the enterprise, the thrift, the industry and the personal sacrifices of the early pioneers.

In 1812, the State resumed charge of the old ferry, and by an act of that year directed the leasing of it by the Commissioners of the Land Office, reserving the Indian rights as provided by the treaty. I dismiss the Indians with the remark that this right of free ferriage was always reserved to them in all the leases, and I have found no statute which deprives them of their ancient privileges.

The war-cloud began to lower over the border, and the frontiersmen heard the sound of approaching conflict. The business at the old ferry up to this time had been steadily increasing; but it entirely ceased at the commencement of actual hostilities. There had been considerable emigration into Canada, as I have had occasion to remark. The large four-horse wagons with their singular loads had been accustomed visitors

at the ferry. There had been frequent crossing to deal at Douglas' store at Fort Erie; at which place the settlers bought their glass and nails. On the whole, the ferrymen at the Black Rock had been greatly benefited, and were rejoicing in growing profits.

A store or grocery had been established, and there were other shops at the Rock; and among others who had found their way to the place was Mr. E. D. Efner,\* to whom you will need no introduction. General Sylvester Mathews, a well-known man here twenty-five years ago, and Loren Hodge and his father resided once at the old ferry.

Fifty years have passed, and the mutability of earthly things receives a forcible illustration in the changes at this place. The canal has obliterated the famous black rock; the railroad runs over the site of the old ferry house and tavern; and the pier cuts in twain the river which had unfolded its regal amplitude between the opposing shores. Squaw Island, once heavily wooded and full of game, now denuded of its forest glories, spreads upon the river a patch of unsightly meadow swamp land; Bird Island has quite gone out of sight; old Fort Erie is a mouldering ruin; and the only improvement upon the scene is the flourishing commercial city to whose history this contribution is made.

This paper shall be closed before the time is entirely exhausted, by recounting the further history of the old ferry from the memoranda of Mr. Lester Brace.

In 1813, to use an expression then prevalent, the "lines were opened," that is, it had become safe for Americans to venture upon business along the river; and Mr. Brace and Mr. St. John, who is represented in this city by numerous descendants, thought that something could be done with the ferry. They bought Hardison's boats and resumed the business of carriers between Canada and the Black Rock. The renewed business

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\* Mr. Efner died, July 4th, 1873.



was inaugurated by a sad catastrophe, which awakened the sympathy of the settlers both at Buffalo and the Rock. On the sixth of June, 1813, the morning being clear and cold, with the ice running in the river, Mr. Brace, with Mr. St. John, to whom the management of the boat was intrusted as the more skillful navigator, started from the Rock to cross the river. The boat was a scow, of about ten tons burthen, propelled by sweeps handled by two or four men, and steered with another long sweep at the stern. The route was to cross the stream directly, as nearly as it could be done, and to drop down to the wharf which was at the present ferry landing. Sometimes this was difficult to accomplish, particularly when ice was running in the river; and the ferrymen were carried down to a point near or opposite to Squaw Island, and then they were obliged to cross and pole up the river to the Black Rock, a laborious and very wearisome task. Two or three of Commodore Perry's vessels which had been fitted out by Henry Eckford at the mouth of the Scoiioiquoides creek, had made an attempt to get up the Niagara into the lake to join the squadron, but had been obliged to cast anchor in the very path of the ferry boat. The ferryman had been advised that it would be a venturesome business to attempt to go above the vessels in order to reach the Canada landing; but Mr. St. John, relying on his skill as a boatman, and his knowledge of the river, said that he could accomplish it without collision. He had not overrated his knowledge or his skill, but an unforeseen danger presented itself which was discovered too late to be avoided. The ferry boat would have cleared the foremost vessel, but it was driven upon the cable which held her at anchor, and the play of the cable as it rose and fell with the motion of the vessel upset the ferry boat and turned the whole party into the river. The boats of the ship nearest them had gone to Buffalo creek, and the party, which consisted of Mr. Brace and Mr. St. John and his son, four soldiers and four other passengers, one of them having a horse with him, were in imminent danger of drowning. Mr. St.

John went down, but rose again and spoke encouraging words to Mr. Brace, putting his hand on his shoulder at the same time; but suddenly sank, and did not rise again. His son, a fine, athletic young man, had nearly reached shallow water when he disappeared; and Mr. Brace grasped a board which floated near him, by means of which his life was saved.

There was another incident which is worthy of preservation. One day there came to the ferry a number of villagers from Buffalo who desired to cross to Canada. Doctor Josiah Trowbridge and Mr. Bemis were of the company. It was a cold December day, and Mr. Brace was averse to crossing; for he was unwell, and there had been rumors which, if true, rendered a visit to the other side somewhat hazardous. Dr. Trowbridge was quite urgent, however, for his business on the Canada shore was impelled by the same motive which induced Leander to swim the Hellespont. Mr. Brace saw the white flag flying on the Canada side, and after some hesitation, consented to allow his brother-in-law, Arden Merrill, to take his place in the boat, and ferry the travelers to the other shore. As the ferry boat approached the Canada landing, two or three sleighs filled with men were observed to be approaching from below; but the matter excited neither alarm nor suspicion. The passengers had hardly landed, when they were seized as prisoners, with the exception of Dr. Trowbridge and Mr. Pomeroy, who escaped to the woods. The British party then fired into the boat, already out in the river. Merrill was killed; his body, stripped of boots and watch, was afterward recovered under a flag of truce. One of the passengers was never afterward heard of; another was taken prisoner, and subsequently released at Halifax. Dr. Trowbridge and his companions found their way to Baxter's, six miles above the ferry, and there seized upon a boat against the remonstrance of the proprietor, who was not disposed to aid their escape, and got safely back to Buffalo Creek.

This was a most unprovoked and unjustifiable outrage; not the only one perpetrated by the enemy during that war. The



people on the ferry boat had trusted to the white flag flying at the ferry landing; and even if they had come over without that protection, they were unarmed, and might have been made prisoners without loss of life.

The ferry was then discontinued, and the boats sunk at the mouth of the Scoijoiquoides creek; from which they were taken by the British in one of their marauding excursions, and carried over to Canada. They were retaken by our army and used for government purposes. Mr. Brace found them in possession of Major Barton, United States Quartermaster; who refused to deliver them to him upon the ground that they had been captured from the enemy and were the property of the government. Mr. Brace, not caring to dispute the Quartermaster's law, paid one hundred dollars to get them again, and in 1815, on the declaration of peace, opened his tavern, resumed his ferry, and continued there until 1821.

That he had been prospered in his business appears from the net income of his tavern and ferry in 1813, which was three thousand dollars. For a number of years it continued to yield a handsome revenue; larger upon an average than has since been derived from it.

Among the persons who boarded with Mr. Brace, at the old ferry, was Captain James Rough, a Scotchman by birth, and a sailor by profession. He was one of the earliest navigators of the western lakes, and had been in the employ of John Jacob Astor when he had a fur trading house at Mackinac. He died at Black Rock at an advanced age, and is buried in the old Guide Board Road cemetery.\* His friend, Major Donald Fraser, placed at the head of his grave a small willow, which has since grown to be a large tree, and the inscription on his tomb closes with the lines of Burns:

With such as he, where'er he be,  
May I be saved or damned.†

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\* See *Buffalo Cemeteries*, ante, p. 55.

† See *Ibid*, p. 57, for the full inscription.

In 1821, the ferry was transferred to Asa Stannard, the father of a race of sons, some of whom became identified with our lake marine, and were well known to the dock merchants of an early day. The present Member of Assembly, from the first district, Walter W. Stannard, is a son of Asa Stannard.

In 1822 or 1824, the old ferry ceased to have legal existence. The act authorizing the lease to Stannard provided, that if the ferry was "injured by the construction of the Great Western Canal," Stannard should be compensated for improvements, but not for loss of profits. The same act gave Stannard an extension of the lease, if he would build a horse-boat for the purpose of ferriage. But Mr. Stannard did not build the boat which the Legislature had contemplated. He continued to use the scow, rowed by four men with two oars, and to cross at the old place, until the construction of the Erie Canal rendered it necessary to remove the ferry to another point. So, in 1824, the old ferry, which had for so long a time been a place of such importance, and which had already assumed the appearance of a village, was deserted. The great rock, the landmark which had become known to all the settlers on this part of the Holland Purchase, and to all travelers on the river, was blown up; the old road was neglected, and became impassable; the houses gradually fell into ruin; and to-day there is nothing on the spot to indicate its former existence.

The ferry was removed to a point of land at the foot of what is now Ferry street, on the south line of the ferry lot; and in 1826, Donald Fraser and Lester Brace became its lessees; but the rapid march of invention and improvement rendered it necessary that the old scow ferry boat should give way to a more rapid method of propulsion, and Brace and Fraser were bound to put upon the river, within one year, a steam or horse-boat.

If it were within the scope of my subject, it would be a pleasant duty to give some reminiscences of Donald Fraser. He had witnessed different vicissitudes of fortune, and had



survived them all, without losing that exuberant good nature which was a remarkable quality in his character. From his early youth he was a courageous and gallant soldier. He had been aid to General Pike at the siege and conquest of Little York (now Toronto), and was with him when he fell, on that memorable occasion; and at the sortie of Fort Erie, as aid to General Porter, when his gallantry and soldierly conduct received the most flattering notice in the despatches of the General to the Commander-in-chief. Major Fraser was afterward on the staff of General Brown; subsequently he served at Fort Niagara; and at a later period he acted as secretary to General Porter, while he was engaged as the United States Commissioner in surveying and establishing the northern boundary between the United States and Canada, under the treaty of Ghent. He was a Scotchman, a member of a celebrated clan, and full of genial and generous feeling toward all mankind. His ferry house and store was a museum of curiosities. At the door, the public was informed that "folks are married here;" and the place was filled with articles, the most of which were unsaleable, presenting, withal, a ludicrous yet remarkable collection of odd things. In the strictest sense of the word, it was a curiosity shop. The resident of thirty years ago will recollect his sleigh-rides in a bark canoe, mounted on runners, with a stuffed deer standing at the prow, and ten or twelve men, habited in Indian costume, paddling furiously as they dashed through the streets at the full speed of four horses ridden by four impromptu savages. After the death of Captain Rough, Fraser disguised himself, and calling upon the prominent citizens of the village, represented that he was the sole heir of the deceased, just arrived from Scotland. So successful was the disguise, in every respect, and his claims were apparently so well founded and sustained, that no question was made about his taking possession of the estate, which was considerable; and he went around among his friends and acquaintances, the acknowledged heir of Captain Rough, and the recognized

owner of his late estate. A paper might be filled with reminiscences of this singular man, but space can be allowed here only to say, that after his removal from Black Rock, he was in the army as Quartermaster; and died a few years ago, an officer at the New York Custom House.

Messrs. Brace and Fraser placed the horse-boat on the river; Mr. Brace making the journey to Albany to ascertain what were the merits of the novel invention which the Legislature required the ferry lessees to adopt; and he brought back the machinery for his boat. It was nothing more than a wheel upon a horizontal plane, propelling the boat by means of cogs playing into the main shaft; four horses treading the wheel, being the propelling power. It was a great invention for those times, and was the second boat of the kind ever used in this country.

In 1840, James Haggart became the lessee of the ferry, and the successor of Brace and Fraser, and placed a steam ferry boat on the river, in accordance with the provisions of an act of the Legislature, granting to him the right to maintain a ferry. Judge Bull, of Black Rock, became a part owner of the ferry, and now owns the land on the American shore opposite the ferry landing. The rent was two hundred dollars per year, payable to the common school fund of Black Rock; and in 1853, the State granted to the City of Buffalo exclusive power over all ferries within its limits, with the right to license and regulate the same.

An apology is due to you for this paper, upon a subject so dry and uninteresting; but as the history of our city will necessarily require some mention of "The Old Ferry," it is not beyond the province of the Historical Society to gather and preserve the fragments contained in this attempt to trace its origin and history.



## ADDENDA.

1. COMMUNICATED TO THE SOCIETY, BY HON. GEORGE R. BABCOCK.\*

BUFFALO, Friday, February 13th, 1863.

HON. M. FILLMORE,  
President, &c.

DEAR SIR:—A severe cold prevents me from attending the Historical Society Club to-night. I enclose the draft of some notes upon the origin of the name of Black Rock, which, if you deem proper, may be read to the Club, with a view to provoke discussion. My examination of the subject has not been thorough, for the want of leisure and books. I have looked into but few authors, and Doctor Dwight is the only one that has furnished much support to the theory which I broached at Mr. Norton's two weeks ago. There are other authorities, however, which I hope to be able to cite hereafter.

I am, with esteem, your obedient servant,

GEORGE R. BABCOCK.

P. S.—Upon another point, allow me to call your attention to the fact, that in the act of our Legislature, passed March 19th, 1802, for holding a treaty with the Senecas, Buffalo creek is called "Buffaloes creek."† This, to me, is new. B.

MANY years since, the idea was suggested to me, by reading a journal of an early French explorer of the lakes, that Bird Island, at the head of the Niagara, was called Black Rock, and gave this name to the adjoining shore. Subsequent reading elicited facts that favored this theory, but I have preserved no notes of them; and since the subject was before the Historical Society Club, the little attention that I have been able to give to it has failed to reveal the original authority for the idea. According to my recollection of the narrative, the craft of the writer was driven by stress of weather to a shelter, at the foot of the lake, behind a *black rock*, of small extent and slight elevation, which afforded protection from the waves. It occurred to me that he had anchored under the lee of Bird Island, which at that period, and within the recollection of many of our citizens, was a bare, black rock, sufficiently above the water to afford shelter for vessels in the deep channel between it and the American shore; and that this "black rock," being the only harbor at this end of the lake, and, therefore, an object of interest to the early voyagers, gave name to the locality, rather than the bare rock upon the main shore, nearly a mile below. The latter was an object of interest to the Indian as a place for fishing, and, subsequently, to the white settlers, as the ferrying-place; but to the traders and voyagers, who for more than one hundred years followed the Griffin's track, the black rock upon the main land was of no importance whatever. It seemed to me not improbable, therefore, that the island bore the name of the Black Rock among the whites, prior to the formation of settlements upon the main land; and that afterwards the name was transferred to the rock, which was known among the Indians as the "fishing rock," and to the whites as the "ferry rock,"

\* Died, September 22d, 1876.

† See Papers on the Name of Buffalo, *ante*, pp. 17-42.

or ferrying-place. The question is not important, and I confess that the evidence to sustain this theory is not conclusive. President Dwight, in the fourth volume of his travels, records a visit to this place which he made in 1804. Speaking of the Mile Strip along the Niagara river, he says:

"Within the Reservation is included the ground opposite to Black Rock."—*p.* 55.

Referring to the mouth of Buffalo creek, he says:

"The river Niagara begins two miles further north, at, or rather\* just below, Black Rock. Here the first perceptible current commences. At Black Rock, a town which is a mile square is laid out by order of the State into house lots. The lots are to be disposed of at public sale in December of this year, upon terms with which I am unacquainted. Should they be equitable, the trade which I mentioned will soon center here. Between this rock and the shore is the only secure harbor on the American, and a much better than any on the British side of the lake, within a great distance."—*p.* 57.

Speaking of harbors on Lake Erie, he says:

"On the southern side I know of but three; Black Rock, Presque Isle and Sandusky Bay."

Bird Island will answer the various conditions required by these extracts, and no point on the main land will meet them. It would be absurd to speak of any point upon the Mile Strip as "opposite to Black Rock," and yet locate Black Rock on the Mile Strip. It will not do to say that the Niagara river begins "just below Black Rock," and that here the "first perceptible current commences," and yet locate Black Rock at the old ferry site. The *town* of Black Rock, it is true, is laid out on the main land, "opposite to Black Rock;" and the trade spoken of is expected to center there, because of the "secure harbor \* \* \* between this rock and the shore."

Black Rock is one of the three harbors on the southern side of the lake, known to the President. In this connection, it may not be amiss to refer to Geddes' report of a survey for a canal between Lakes Erie and Ontario, made in 1809. He speaks of the "exceedingly safe and excellent harbor formed by Bird Island and the reef;" and of the "upper and lower store-houses at Black Rock;" the former of which, a stone building sixty-four by forty-four feet, built in 1808, he distinctly locates on the north-east corner of Bird Island. He further says:

"There is no place on the main shore where a wharf can be built, so that a vessel can lay her side to and load."

This would seem to fix the "harbor" of Black Rock at the island. It is, undoubtedly, true, that since the first settlement of the shores of the river by the whites, the name of Black Rock has been uniformly applied to the main land and not to the island.

2. COMMUNICATED TO THE SOCIETY, BY COL. WM. A. BIRD, APRIL 3, 1863.

"BLACK ROCK," I assume, took its name from the ferrying-place, and I offer the following reasons and concurring circumstances for this belief.



The ferry at this place seems to have been used from the very earliest settlement of the country, and it was the only place to cross the Niagara river above the Falls. The landing on the United States shore was at the base of the broad surface of a black, corniferous limestone rock, extending along the shore some two or three hundred feet, and having a width of from fifty to eighty feet—its lower end extending from the shore, nearly at right angles, some three or four feet above the water; making an eddy below, and a convenient place for ferry boats to load and unload. This rock was a celebrated fishing place, where it was not unusual to find forty or fifty Indians at a time, fishing. The point was known as the *lower reef* or rapids, the *upper reef* being opposite to where Fort Porter now is.

This ferry was occupied and run by persons on the Canada shore previous to 1804; after which time it was leased by this State for several years; and in all the leases it was provided that the Indians should pass *free*, as had been agreed in the treaty with them.

Mr. Van Rensselaer, long in the Engineer and Surveyor's office, Albany, and who is more familiar with the papers and records in that office than any other person there, writes to me as follows:

"On the original map of the lands laid out along the Niagara river, made by Joseph Annin in 1803, there is vacant ground on the river, say five hundred and forty acres; marked thereon, was a 'house' and a 'rock' on the shore, and written in black ink, in small letters, 'Black Rock,' indicating, to my mind, that there was a rock at that place.

"I have examined the proposed plan for a village at Black Rock, directed by the Legislature, by the act passed April 11th, 1804, and now in the Surveyor General's office. At the foot of Hampshire street, on the shore of the lake, is written in small figures, 'Black Rock.' I find no indications, except what is designated on the map in the public offices, and nothing on the minutes of the land office."

I have looked into Spafford's and Gordon's Gazetteers, and I find nothing in relation to the origin of the name; but have found the following in French's Gazetteer, published in 1860:

"Black Rock receives its name from the color of the rock which crops out at the ferry landing."

Doctor Cooper, a very intelligent and scientific traveler, in his journal of a visit to Niagara, in 1809, goes from Landon's, in Buffalo, "three miles to Miller's ferry, along the banks of Lake Erie." He says:

"The ride along the Niagara is beautiful; the country, well settled. In fact, it may be regarded as a continued village from the ferry, opposite Black Rock, for thirty-three or thirty-four miles, down to Newark."

We know that in all new settlements, towns and villages get a name from some trifle which marks the locality; as the "big tree," "cold spring," "horse-heads," "cross-roads," &c.; so it is reasonable to believe,—indeed, the conviction is almost irresistible,—that the village of Black Rock derived its name from the black rock at the ferrying-place.

# ANNUAL ADDRESS

BY THE

## REV. JOHN C. LORD, D. D.

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PREACHERS, PEDAGOGUES AND POETS OF BUFFALO IN 1825.

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DELIVERED AT ST. JAMES HALL, BY APPOINTMENT OF THE BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ON  
THE OCCASION OF THE FOURTH "OLD FOLKS' FESTIVAL,"  
JANUARY 24, 1867.

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FELLOW CITIZENS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

In their selection of the speaker to-night, the Buffalo Historical Society have had in view the Annual Festival of the Old Residents of this city, and do not expect from me any learned or elaborate historical discussion. Having been a collector of antiquities long before the Society I represent for this time was originated, I have not been so much a contributor to their collections, as a rival, in a humble way, for old books and other monuments of the past. But they have this advantage, that Historical Societies are corporations living on through the centuries, and gradually absorbing all private collections as their owners pass off the stage. For my own, I desire no other or better eventual destination. I am laboring for them, if not with them, in gathering materials which are to be consigned to their archives. "Art is long, life is short," is an adage of the Latins (*Ars longa, Vita brevis*), beautifully rendered by one of our poets:

"Art is long, and Time is fleeting,  
And our hearts, though strong and brave,  
Still like muffled drums are beating  
Funeral marches to the grave."



The Historical Society of this city is the natural depository of the relics of the past; and it is to be hoped that our citizens will remember this in their testamentary dispositions, if not before.

From any formal or lengthy discussion of historical topics, I am excused, not only by the occasion, but by the exhaustive labors of my predecessors. Who would care to enter upon the early exploration of the region about Lake Erie by the Jesuits and their associates who traversed the wilderness, while the first settlements in New England were yet in their infancy, after the able dissertation of O. H. Marshall? Who would venture upon the early history of Western New York after the elaborate history in which William Ketchum has made us familiar with its Indian tribes, treaties and councils? Of the war of 1812 and the destruction of Buffalo, what remains to be said? The burnings and murders of that time, the flight of the population, the barbarities of the British and their savage allies are as familiar as household words.

And what more can be said as to that vexed question, why Buffalo was called "Buffalo;" whether the great bison of the West, extending his visits to this locality, gave us the name, or the multitude of bass-wood trees found here described in the Indian tongue by a word resembling our cognomen, came to designate the Place of Bass-wood? If Buffalo means soft timber, we have enough of that yet to fully justify its appropriateness. If it means the hard-headed representative of the western prairies, who monopolizes the best pastures and takes possession of every oasis in the great North American Desert, we have his likeness still, and may congratulate ourselves that in either case the name of the Queen City of the Lakes is sufficiently significant of portions of its population.

Besides, the very able and flattering reminiscences of many of our old citizens which have appeared in the papers of the Buffalo Historical Society, would prevent my attempting the formal biography of any one departed magnate, were it not forbidden

by the character of the occasion which calls us together, and the general and reasonable expectation of free sketches of the past, in which may be mingled the grave and the gay, as rather suitable for this Annual Old Settlers' Festival, already assuming the importance of a permanent institution.

I shall go back to the period of my first knowledge of Buffalo, and mainly confine your attention to the year 1825, memorable for the completion of the great Erie Canal, the visit of La Fayette, the dedication of "Ararat" by Mordecai Manuel Noah, and the execution of the three Thayers for the murder of John Love.

Perhaps the completion of the Erie Canal may be considered the great event of the first half of the nineteenth century. It is now almost forgotten that this magnificent undertaking was bitterly opposed by a large party usually dominant in the State; that the city of New York, which it has made the centre of the trade of the New World, was, with a characteristic stupidity, generally hostile to "Clinton's big ditch," as its citizens facetiously termed it; and that nothing but the genius and energy of the great statesman who projected it, and the completion and use of the long level west of Utica, when unbelievers who maintained that it would never hold water, were made to see boats afloat, could ever have secured the completion of the greatest work of the age.

The reception of General La Fayette was a great event for Buffalo. The old veteran stood upon a platform in front of the Eagle Tavern,\* and the crowds assembled from the surrounding country passed him in single file, each person taking him by the hand. The largest battle of the Revolution in which he was engaged, could not have resulted in greater fatigue to the old hero than the hand-shaking of that day.

I saw the foundation of "Ararat" laid, not on Grand Island,

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\* Situated on Van Staphorst avenue (Main street), west side, just south of Cazenovia avenue (Court street.) The "eagle" which held its place for so many years over the door of this celebrated inn, and gave it its name now spreads its wings over the United States department in the library of the Society.—ED.



but in St. Paul's church, with a strange mixture of Hebrew and Christian rites, a curious commingling of Jew and Gentile. There was Major Noah, with his Hebrew chorister and ritual, dedicating Grand Island as a City of Refuge for the scattered people who rejected Christ; and by his side an Episcopal rector in full canonicals, uttering a Christian benediction. Ararat came to nothing, and the only memorial of this City of Refuge which remains is the corner-stone, all there ever was of it, which, owing to the efforts of the Hon. Lewis F. Allen, has been deposited in the rooms of the Historical Society of Buffalo.

Still giving our attention to this memorable year, we have to note the leading men of that time resident in Buffalo:—our orators, statesmen and poets; our clergymen, schoolmasters, doctors and lawyers; our beaus, bon-vivants and wits. Perhaps it will be said: "This is rather a grandiloquent catalogue for a western village in 1825." But is not every village a world in miniature, and especially such a precocious town as Buffalo; always anticipating its coming greatness; always blowing its horn in the face of mankind; always counting, Chicago fashion, three or four for every two of its population!

Buffalo, in 1825, published to the world in general, and particularly and pugnaciously thrust into the face of Black Rock, with whom we waged a deadly war, a census of two thousand four hundred souls. Possibly there may have been a population approximating to two thousand; but the most ambitious, restless, pugnacious, egotistic people in the State of New York; and withal, abounding in men of great enterprise and ability. Surely among such a population, our catalogue need not be considered a joke, or even an exaggeration, seeing that in little more than fifty years, a noble city of more than one hundred thousand inhabitants, of which these men were the fathers and founders, bears witness that there were "giants" here in those days,—men of renown, who have left their mark for all time on the shores of Lake Erie.

But it may be anxiously inquired, how can you bring your numerous classes within the compass of an Address which ought not to exceed thirty or forty minutes? I reply, that as one of the standing orators for the Old Folks' Festival, I wish to lay out work for several years for myself and associates, and this Address is but an exordium. I do not intend to imitate the example of that long-winded Scotch Presbyterian, who, being called on to preach before the Vermont Legislature, stated, after an introduction which occupied an hour, that he should consider the remainder of his subject under nineteen particulars; upon which intimation his appalled audience rose and left him to discourse to vacant seats. I engage to touch lightly upon a few points, reserving the nineteen particulars for future anniversaries and other orators, who cannot fail to be grateful for the large and exhaustless field I have opened up before them.

It will not be deemed inappropriate to commence with our pedagogues. The "schoolmaster was abroad" in Buffalo, in 1825; and in the school work of that year, I may say with Æneas, "*Magna pars fui.*" The two teachers best known to myself were Millard Fillmore and John C. Lord. Mr. Fillmore's work in this interesting field had ceased before mine began; but knowing many of his pupils, and being *particularly interested* in one of them, I consider myself at liberty to refer to his labors as a teacher of the young idea.

Mr. Fillmore was engaged in this vocation at the Cold Spring, near Buffalo,\* and also in the village proper, in the old Mullett house, then standing near the corner of Main and Genesee streets. He "boarded round," at least a part of the time, and was "well thought of." Indeed, he was considered so "likely a young man" among the old folks, that it was suggested by some that he would yet come to be a Justice of the Peace, while others did not think the Assembly Chamber of Albany beyond the reach of his endeavors.

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\* Two miles north of the village center.



I cannot of my knowledge speak of his success, in general, as a teacher; but having had one of his pupils, a daughter of the late Dr. Ebenezer Johnson, afterwards under my care, under a special covenant to honor and obey, I have been led to believe that Mr. Fillmore's discipline was not what it should have been. Yet this same village schoolmaster succeeded in after life in the government of a great nation, which esteemed him a sagacious President and successful Chief Magistrate, of whom it can only be said that he is not the first of the notable rulers of men who was yet unable to govern a woman. One proof I can produce of the intellectual progress of his pupils, in the poetic effusion of one of his scholars, which, if unequal to Gray's *Elegy*, is sufficiently striking and unique to deserve a record in the Historical Society of Buffalo. This poem details the fate of a young man, suddenly cut off in the prime of life:—probably one of the boys who enjoyed the instruction of our distinguished townsman.

This brilliant effusion is "owned to" by one of Mr. Fillmore's pupils, and presented to the singing meeting in the New England Kitchen,\* where it has been read with great approbation. Here it is:

Lines on the Dreadful Death of Calib Dulittle, who recently came to this settlement from Vermont.

One Calib Dulittle was his name,  
Who lately to this village came,  
Residing ni his brother Jeemes,  
Last Friday noon went out, it seems,

To cut sum timber for a sled.  
The sno being deep, he had to wade  
Full 40 rod to a ash tree,  
The top being dry, as you may see.

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\* A distinguishing feature of the Old Settlers' Festival, presided over and conducted by Mrs. Dr. Lord.

Our Calib swung his ax on hi,  
 And thro the air he let it fly;  
 His work he thot was nearly done,  
 For it was now ni sit of sun.

The tree was holler at the coar,  
 And when it come a tumblin ore  
 It hit poor Cale upon the hed,  
 And he was tookin up for ded.

REMARKABLE was soon distrest  
 While THANKFUL, she wept in his brest,  
 No tongue can tell how MERCY felt  
 While on his shockin deth she dwelt.

Oh, cruel fate, thou wast unkind  
 To take our Cale and leave us hind,  
 For Calib was our rite han man,  
 And worker of our good farm land.

And when that tre it killed him ded,  
 It nocked our prospiks in the hed,  
 And laid him in the churchyard bed,  
 While on his body worms is fed.

Now, skollars, all a warnin take,  
 How Calib Dulittle met his fate,  
 And when you have a sled to make,  
 Don't let a tre fall on your pate.

Of the merits of John C. Lord, as schoolmaster, and of his select school, which was located in one of the Old Court House rooms, in the winter of 1825-'26, I am too modest to speak. We had a liberal range of study from Webster's Spelling Book up to the French and Roman classics; but as several of our professional and literary notables, such as Dr. White and O. H. Marshall, Esq., were among the pupils, it may yet be hoped that "Papers" on this interesting topic may be read before the Historical Society.

I shall only refer to an extract from a New Year's Poem, published on the first of January, 1826, in the *Buffalo Journal*,



of which David M. Day was the publisher, which poetic effusion, of my positive knowledge, came out of that schoolroom; and I shall quote only what relates to the affairs of 1825 and its remarkable events.

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VII.

Let despots mock the joy with which we met  
Upon our shores our fathers' friend and son,  
And greeted him—the gallant La Fayette.  
Dare they insult the flag that bore him home?  
No! Europe never will again forget  
The due respect and proper courtesy  
Columbia's Banner claims upon the sea.

VIII.

My Muse wants breathing, she is too sublime  
For modern ears; 't were well to take good care  
Lest criticks ridicule her lofty rhyme—  
Which would indeed be a most sad affair.  
We'll lower our strain then, and devote a line  
To home concerns. 'T is said that Buffalo  
Is soon to be a city, and I know—

IX.

No reason why she should not. The foundation  
Of Ararat we lately helped to fix  
And have had other public celebrations  
(According to my note-book sixty-six,)  
And have a right to make our calculations  
On future greatness. There is something pretty  
And quite harmonious in the name of "city."

X.

The year hath been to us a Jubilee,  
A year of great rejoicing; we have seen  
Lake Erie's waters moving to the sea  
On their own element. The bark I deem  
Which bore our gift, more famous yet shall be,  
Than that proud ship in which to ancient Greece  
The intrepid Jason bore the Golden Fleece.

## XI.

Yet boast we not of mighty labors done  
 In our own strength or wisdom; we would bless  
 His sacred name in morning orison,  
 Who stamped his footstep on the wilderness;  
 And towns and cities rose,—the busy hum  
 Of congregated man, where erst HE viewed  
 One dark and boundless solitude.

## XII.

And the white sail now glistens on the Lake,  
 Where late the Indian in his bark canoe,  
 Bursting from some low marsh or tangled brake,  
 Shot forth upon the waters joyously,  
 Perchance his annual hunting tour to make,  
 Where since the cultivated field, I ween,  
 That savage mariner himself hath seen.

I dare not compare this poem with that inimitable effusion of Mr. Fillmore's pupil; and outside of their respective merits there are two reasons for my forbearance; one is, that my competitor is a lady; and the second is, that the aforesaid lady has it in her power greatly to annoy me if I should be so unfortunate as to awaken her indignation. Let her wear the laurel crown, so there be domestic tranquillity—peace at the hearth.

While on the subject of poetry, that remarkable ballad on the murder of John Love which appeared in the same year ought not to be omitted. It should be preserved, like a fly in amber, in the archives of the Buffalo Historical Society. Whether it was the production of any of the pupils who attended the schools before referred to I cannot say. It has been claimed by the town of Boston, but I think it belongs to Buffalo.

As the cities of Greece contended for the birthplace of Homer, so it may hereafter happen to Boston and Buffalo to contend for the honor of the nativity of the immortal poet who sang the dreadful fate of John Love and the crime of the three Thayers, who were executed in this city, June 17th, 1825. I have had surmises that one of my own pupils might possibly have



been the author of this lamentable ballad, but I will not press the claim, as my friend Fillmore may contend with justice that this mournful ditty was quite as likely to have issued from his school as mine. I read it as a reminiscence of the year 1825, and for the purpose of putting it upon record in the Historical Society.

THE LAMENTABLE BALLAD ON THE MURDER OF JOHN LOVE BY THE  
THREE THAYERS.

In England some years ago  
the sun was pleasant fair and gay  
John Love on board of a ship he entered  
and sald in to america.

Love was a man very percevering  
in making trades with all he see  
he soon engaged to be a sailor  
to sail up and down on Lake Eri.

he then went into the Southern countries,  
to trade for furs and other skins  
but the cruel French and saveg Indians  
came very near of killing him.

But God did spare him a little longer  
he got his loding and came down the lake  
he went into the town of boston,  
Where he made the grate mistake.

With Nelson Thayer he made his station  
thru the summer for to stay  
Nelson had two brothers Isaac and Israel  
love lent them money for thare debts to pay

Love lent them quite a sum of money  
he did befriend them every way  
but the cruel cretres tha couldnt be quiet  
till they had taken his sweet life away

One day as tha were all three together  
this dreadful murder tha did contrive  
tha agreed to kill Love and keep it secret  
and then to live and spend thare lives

On the fifteenth evening of last december  
in eighteen hundred and twenty four  
tha invited Love to go home with them  
and they killed and murdered him on the floor

First Isaac with his gun he shot him  
he left his gun and went away  
Then nelson with his ax he chopt him  
till he had no life that he could perceive

After tha had killed and most mortly brus'd him  
tha draw'd him out whare tha killed thare hogs  
tha then carried him of a pease from the house  
and deposited him down by a log

The next day tha ware so very bold  
tha had loves horses riding round  
Some asked the reason of Loves being absent  
tha said he had clerd and left the town

tha said he had forged in the town of Eri  
the sheriff was in pursuit of him  
He left the place and run awa  
and left his debts to collect by them

tha went and forgd a power of turney  
to collect loves notes when they ware due  
tha tore and stormed to git thare pay  
and sevrl nabors they did sue

After they had run to a high degree  
in killing love and forgery  
tha soon were taken and put in prison  
whare tha remained for thare cruelty

Tha were bound in irons in the dark dungon  
for to remain for a little time  
tha ware all condemd by the grand jury  
for this most foul and dreadful crime

Then the Judge pronounced thare dreadful sentence  
with grate candidness to behold  
you must be hanged untell your ded  
and lord have mursey on your sols.



But enough has been said of the poets and poetry of Buffalo in 1825. I shall defer the pathetic narrative of the shipwreck of the canal boat Medora to a future occasion.

Passing from these light topics, will not the audience accept a graver theme, in brief sketches of the clergymen of Buffalo, in the year of our Lord 1825, of whom it may be truly said that they would lose nothing by comparison with their successors in 1867. The leading denominations were represented here in 1825, each by a single church. The first regularly settled clergyman was the Rev. Miles P. Squier, in the First Presbyterian Congregation. He was an educated man, not without good points, but with an overweening self appreciation, which, while it gave offence to some, was to the major part of his acquaintance a source of amusement. He could not have exhibited a greater dignity of deportment had he been Bishop of Rome or Czar of all the Russias, and resembled the man described by Coleridge who always took off his hat when he spoke of himself. He would have shaken hands with Andrew Jackson or George the Fourth, with the patronizing and condescending air of one conferring a great favor. In the latter years of his life he wrote a book on the "Origin of Evil," in which, I have no doubt, he imagined he had mastered this intricate subject, untied the Gordian knot in theology, and left nothing further to be said or desired on the topic. He was a worthy man and a sincere Christian, notwithstanding his eccentricities, and is remembered with affection by some of our old residents. The successor of Mr. Squier was the Rev. Gilbert Crawford. I became acquainted with him and attended his services in 1825. He was a Scotchman, and had had the advantage of the admirable training of the time-honored and witness-bearing church of his fathers. Though tenacious of the five points of Calvinism, and in the beginning of his ministry inclined to limit the entrance of the Way of Life to Presbyterians of the bluest cast, yet with time and experience he became tolerant and catholic in his judgments of those who "cast out devils" under other

symbols than the Assembly's Catechism. Mr. Crawford was one of the ablest preachers ever settled in Western New York. He was of a more ardent nature than is usual with his countrymen, and was at times a model of pulpit eloquence, moving all hearts with his vehement and passionate oratory.

Though Gilbert Crawford has long rested from his labors, yet his memory is green in the hearts of multitudes in Western New York who have been made the wiser and the better by his ministry.

With the Rev. Mr. Searle, Rector of St. Paul's, I next made acquaintance. He was the predecessor of the Rev. Dr. Shelton, who has been settled here for a longer period than any other clergyman, and who enjoys a large measure of the esteem and affection of our community, irrespective of denominational boundaries. Mr. Searle was a finished gentleman in manners, and was said to be of somewhat convivial tastes. He was highly and deservedly esteemed. My impression is that he was the highest kind of High Churchman, holding the Kingdom of Heaven to be a close corporation in the Episcopal Church, and looking upon those without her pale, as the "celestials" regard all people not inhabiting the "Flowery Kingdom," as outside barbarians.

Of Diocesan Bishops, we knew little in those primitive days. I do not remember to have seen Bishop Hobart, the Episcopal Bishop of New York, at this time. I well recollect, however, an introduction to Bishop Dubois, the Roman Catholic Prelate of this State in 1825. He was made known to me by Mr. Le Couteulx, an old and worthy citizen, whose memory should long since have been honored by a "Paper" read before our Historical Society. Bishop Dubois was the most polite of Frenchmen, and seemed amazed at his own hardihood in venturing so far beyond the pale of civilization; feeling, like the traveled Turk, that he had, in his visit to Buffalo, reached the "Wall of the World."

My recollection is that the only Roman Catholic priest here in 1825, was Father Pax, a German, who ministered in a very



humble edifice, then standing upon the present site of St. Louis' Cathedral. He was esteemed a worthy man, but a severe disciplinarian; for though his name was Peace, his practice was occasionally belligerent—the old gentleman freely applying his cane to the shoulders of refractory parishioners.

The Baptist Church of this city has never enjoyed the labors of a more eloquent divine than the Rev. Mr. Handy, who, in 1825, held forth the Word of Life in Buffalo. He labored as one standing by the grave's mouth, with his eye fixed upon the Heavenly City he was soon to enter.

How well I remember his youthful and intellectual countenance, upon which the shadows of death were falling, his earnest and eloquent appeals, his affectionate manner, his hectic cough, marking him for the grave, where he was early borne by a weeping community. Many were attracted to his ministry outside the Baptist communion, for while a sincere immersionist, he was a catholic Christian, who held the essential doctrines of the gospel far above all denominational shibboleths.

There remains but, the Methodist Episcopal communion, which, if I mistake not, was served in 1825 by the Rev. Glezen Fillmore, an able and faithful minister of the New Testament, whose praise is in all the churches, and who yet survives,\* the venerable and venerated relic of a past age.

In conclusion, let me say that the Historical Society of this city has the main design of preserving all records of the early history of Buffalo, and all the reminiscences of its pioneer population. They are fast passing away. Every year their numbers are diminishing, and we have evidence to-night that only a few venerable Fathers and Mothers survive of those who encountered the perils of the wilderness, and who suffered the loss of the fruits of their industry in the burning of Buffalo. They remind us by their presence of what they have done and suffered, in laying the foundation of this populous, wealthy and

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\* Rev. Mr. Fillmore died January 26th, 1875.

beautiful city. What amazing changes have these aged men and women seen, changes in a lifetime, which ordinarily require centuries in their accomplishment. What contrasts must be apparent to them, as they look back to the period when Buffalo was an insignificant hamlet, fringed with impervious forest on one hand, and the solitary waters of our great inland sea on the other; the mournful sighing of the winds in the tree tops, and the solemn singing of the stormy waves, deep calling unto deep, only broken by the whoops of the savages who came to gaze upon the white men who had invaded their solitudes. With what anxious foreboding did the young mother clasp her babe to her bosom, as the red warriors looked curiously into her cabin, knowing that neither age nor sex were spared by them when out upon the war path. Could that fair girl or her youthful husband, in their most vivid imaginings, have conceived it possible that they should live to see such a city as this, with a harbor whitened with the sails of many populous states, and a commerce more important than that of the entire sea-board, in the year 1800? Like a dream, when one awaketh, must these changes seem to the venerable survivors who saw Buffalo in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Separated from the East, the supplies of the early settlers were forwarded slowly by dangerous and uncertain routes. They were deprived of the ordinary appliances of civilization, dwelling apart from their brethren. They now hear the sounds of commerce on an artificial river connecting this city with the ocean and the world; and the solitudes, which once were broken only by the hoot of the owl, or the melancholy cry of the whip-poor-will, are now resonant with the rush of commerce and the shouts of the canal driver. They fled, more than half a century ago, from their burning habitations, pursued by a merciless foe; they saw the results of all their toil dissipated in a conflagration, from which it seemed that Buffalo could never recover; they have since seen her rise from her ashes like the fabled Phoenix, and on her banner the excellent motto of the Empire State, of



which she is the second city in commercial rank, "Excelsior."

Recovering from the momentary panic, the people of Buffalo, with the indomitable energy which was a marked characteristic of our pioneer population, returned, not to sit down among the ashes of their houses and their goods; but to rebuild and restore, to lay anew its foundations, to repeat the trials and self-denial of years, the fruits of which were destroyed in an hour, to commence their labors a second time in a solitude as profound as that which they invaded when they first entered their cabins on the shores of Erie.

Survivors of those who have borne the burthen and heat of the day, we welcome you to these festivities, commemorative of your trials and labors, and especially of your triumph. Behold the city which you and yours have built! Behold this audience, in which is represented so much intelligence, character and wealth, so much youth and beauty; which, but for you, could never have met to make this Hall vocal with their congratulations! The Historical Society of Buffalo welcome you, and promise, before this vast congregation, that your names and your deeds shall not perish from among men; that future generations shall know from their archives, the privations and sufferings of that enterprising band, who first camped under the "grand old trees" bordering the solitary waters, now ploughed by a thousand keels; who, under the arches of that primitive forest, or in their rude log cabins, offered prayer and praise to Him who had been a wall about them in all their perilous journey, and to whom they looked for protection from the dangers they must yet encounter.

We welcome the living. We honor the dead. We implore for these survivors the divine benediction and the good hope of another and a better life.

Over the dead of two wars, separated by more than half a century, some of you have been called to mourn; the associates of your youth, the friends who labored by your side, have for the most part passed into the unseen world, yet you have not

labored or suffered in vain. You behold the result of your toils to-day, and beyond this "there remaineth a rest for the people of God." Why should you count the sufferings of this time worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed?

Wayworn and aged friends,—may we not apply to you the pathetic words of a poet:

“My feet are worn and weary with the march,  
On the rough road and up the steep hill-side;  
Oh, City of our God, I fain would see  
Thy pastures green, where peaceful waters glide.

My garments, travel-worn and stained with dust,  
Oft rent by briars and thorns that crowd my way,  
Would fain be made, O Lord, my righteousness,  
Spotless and white in Heaven's unclouded ray.

Patience, poor soul, the Savior's feet were worn,  
The Savior's heart and hands were weary, too;  
His garments travel-stained, worn and old,  
His vision blinded with a pitying dew.

Love thou the path of sorrow that He trod;  
Toil on, and wait in patience for thy rest;  
Oh, City of our Lord; we soon shall see  
Thy glorious walls, home of the loved and blest.”





THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS  
OF THE  
BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, JUNE 26, 1873.

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BY OLIVER G. STEELE.

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MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I have been requested by the Board of Managers of this Society to prepare for this occasion a brief sketch of the origin, history and objects of the organization.

The subject of organizing a Historical Society in this city was discussed by many of our citizens previous to 1862. The importance of procuring and preserving authentic memorials of the settlement of the city and county, and of the individuals who were its pioneers, and gave tone, direction and character to its early history, became more and more apparent as the city advanced in population and importance. There had been occasional gatherings of early settlers for festive or charitable purposes previous to 1860; but the institution of "Old Settlers' Festivals" was not organized in any permanent form until the early part of the late civil war, and no organization of a specially historical character had been effected.

The gradual passing away of individuals identified with the origin and growth of the city, impressed many of our citizens



with the importance of securing the scattered remnants of early local history floating throughout the city and vicinity, and preserving them in a tangible and systematic manner.

In the process of organization no interest could be awakened except by the voluntary action of such of our citizens as felt interested in preserving such memorials for the benefit and for the example of those who would fill their places in the future business growth and intellectual progress of the city. No legal power existed which would compel individuals to gather up and deposit such historical memorials as they might possess; neither was there any existing fund or provision in any form which would induce parties to give attention to the subject. The movement was therefore entirely spontaneous, dependent upon the interest which might be created by the action of a few individuals. Such was the condition of the public mind in 1860 and 1862.

A few gentlemen in discussing the subject in the early part of 1862, determined to make an effort to organize what it was believed would meet the wishes of a considerable number of our citizens.

A call for a meeting of citizens for this purpose was made through the daily papers, to be held at the law office of O. H. Marshall, March 25th, 1862. This call was signed by the following gentlemen:

Geo. R. Babcock, Henry W. Rogers, O. H. Marshall, Wm. Dorsheimer, Dr. John C. Lord, Dr. Walter Clarke, L. F. Allen.

The call was responded to by the following gentlemen:

Geo. W. Clinton, H. W. Rogers, Geo. R. Babcock, Oliver G. Steele, Jas. P. White, Dr. Walter Clarke, Henry Lovejoy, Wm. Dorsheimer, A. L. Baker, Joseph Warren; David F. Day, Edward S. Rich, John Howcutt.

Mr. Lewis F. Allen was appointed Chairman, and O. H. Marshall, Secretary.

After some discussion and interchange of views, it was, on motion of H. W. Rogers,

*Resolved*, That it is expedient to organize a Historical Society for the City of Buffalo and County of Erie; and that the Chairman appoint a committee of seven to report a plan of organization.

Mr. O. H. Marshall, Rev. Dr. Hosmer, Rev. Dr. Clarke, Messrs. Wm. Dorsheimer, James P. White, Geo. R. Babcock and Geo. W. Clinton were appointed said committee.

This committee met April 8th, 1872, and a draft of a Constitution and By-laws was agreed upon and directed to be reported to a meeting of citizens, to be held at the rooms of the Medical Association, No. 7 North Division street, April 15th, 1862. At the time specified a highly respectable number of citizens assembled, and organized by the appointment of Hon. Millard Fillmore as Chairman, and O. H. Marshall as Secretary. Mr. Marshall, from the committee, submitted the Constitution and By-laws prepared by the committee, which were unanimously adopted by the meeting.

The Constitution and By-laws then adopted have, with slight alterations, continued to be the laws of the Society to the present time.

The documents were directed to be engrossed; and the committee were authorized to obtain the signatures of all citizens who might desire to become members.

A meeting for the election of officers was fixed for the first Tuesday in May, 1862, and was well attended.

The election resulted as follows:

*President*—Hon. Millard Fillmore.

*Vice-President*—Lewis F. Allen.

*Councillors*—Geo. R. Babcock, Geo. W. Clinton, Walter Clarke, Nathan K. Hall, H. W. Rogers, Wm. Shelton, O. H. Marshall, Geo. W. Hosmer, Wm. Dorsheimer.

At a meeting of the Board of Managers, held at the office of Rogers & Bowen, May 13th, 1862, Chas. D. Norton was appointed Secretary and Treasurer, and Guy H. Salisbury Corresponding Secretary and Librarian.

Mr. Dorsheimer offered the use of his office as a place of



meeting for the Board of Managers, and of deposit for the books and papers of the Society, which offer was accepted.

On motion of L. F. Allen, the President was requested to deliver the Inaugural Address before the Society, at such time as he might select.

Messrs. Babcock and Dorsheimer were appointed a committee to procure a suitable place for meeting.

The Society met June 3d, 1862, at the office of Mr. Dorsheimer. The committee on Inaugural Address reported that they had procured American Hall as the place for its delivery.

The Inaugural Address was delivered July 2d, 1862, by the President, at American Hall, to a large and appreciative audience.\* It set forth in simple and appropriate language the objects of the Society, which were to "discover, procure and preserve whatever may relate to the history of Western New York in general, and of the City of Buffalo in particular." It was not to teach but to preserve history.

The Address sketched the early history and appearance of the settlement; discussed at some length the origin of the name of Buffalo as applied to this locality, together with the singular names of the streets and avenues, as fixed by the agent of the Holland Land Company, Mr. Joseph Ellicott, with the subsequent alterations to the present names, etc.; and closed with an appeal to the citizens to co-operate earnestly in carrying into effect the objects of the Society.

The Address and the proceedings of the meeting gave tone and direction to the progress of the Society; completing its organization and laying out definitely the line of effort which it would be called upon to adopt to insure success.

The meetings of the Society since that period have been held monthly, and have always been attended by a sufficient number of members to insure and perpetuate its existence.

Mr. Guy H. Salisbury, the Corresponding Secretary and Li-

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\*See Inaugural Address, *ante*, p. 1.

brarian, gave much of his valuable time to the books and papers of the Society, and also for a considerable time acted as Recording Secretary.

Mr. Charles D. Norton, who had temporarily filled the office of Treasurer, resigned in September, 1862; and Mr. Oliver G. Steele was appointed Treasurer, which office he continued to fill until 1870.

In the fall of 1862 an arrangement was made for a series of lectures before the Society on subjects of local history, by members of the Society, without expense, and free to the public. The lectures were well attended during the winter of 1862-63, and a great variety of local information was acquired for the benefit of the Society.

It soon became evident, however, that a special effort was necessary to provide sufficient income to meet the current expenses of the Society, and insure its permanence.

At the suggestion of Mr. Fillmore it was determined to secure sufficient private subscriptions to enable the Society to provide for its current expenses for five years. Under this suggestion fifty gentlemen bound themselves to pay twenty dollars per year, for five years. This arrangement was afterwards modified by allowing each subscriber to pay fifty dollars at one time, and become thus a life-member of the Society, and the balance of the subscription in annual payments of ten dollars.

This arrangement having been effected, the Society has continued its organization, carrying out successfully to the present time the general objects of the Society.

In concert with other societies of the city, an arrangement was made with the Young Men's Association for a joint occupancy of the Association Buildings, on the corner of Main and Eagle streets, which continued until January, 1873.

The great increase of valuable books, papers, portraits and other miscellaneous property of the Society, could not but impress the officers with the necessity of obtaining more extensive apartments, and such as were fire-proof.



The rooms we now occupy were offered to the Society by the Western Savings Bank on terms so favorable, and were so well adapted to its purposes, that it was determined to secure them for its permanent use. An amicable and satisfactory arrangement was made with the officers of the Young Men's Association for the cancelment of the lease, and the rights under it. This Society, therefore, took possession of their present rooms early in January last, and have fitted them up and furnished them in the manner and style which you now see before you.

The success of the Society has certainly exceeded the expectation of its originators. This result has been owing far more to the steady, persistent attention of the original members, than to the expenditure of money. Its income has barely provided for the current expenses, but it has endeavored to preserve the life-membership fund intact, as the basis of a permanent endowment fund.

The books, pamphlets, manuscripts, photographs, &c., have been presented to the Society by its members and others interested in its success.

By the last report, made at the annual meeting, July 14th, 1872, they appear as follows:

No. of Volumes in Library.....	4,283
“ Newspapers and Periodicals,....	381
“ Pamphlets in Cases.....	4,326
“ Portraits in Oil.....	43
“ Cabinet Photographs.....	133
“ Maps on Rollers.....	60
“ Photographs in Albums, about.....	300
“ Autographs.....	235

There is also quite a collection of coins and relics of the war of 1812, and of the late civil war.

The Obituary Record from 1811 to 1872 contains the names of nearly ten thousand citizens of the city and county.

The Marriage Record for the same period contains about twelve thousand names.

The Society is indebted for these last named very valuable

books of record to the present librarian, Dr. G. S. Armstrong.

The increased expenses of the Society, and the lack of resident paying members, together with the contingency of continued interest in the Society, in a community so largely interested in the active business of the city, shows plainly the necessity of providing a foundation fund to insure its permanence. The present fund is about \$4,000. A movement is now in progress by the officers of the Society, to increase that fund to at least \$20,000; the income from which, with the current income from resident members, will place the Society upon a firm foundation, and reflect credit upon the city and the individuals who contribute to that end. It is hoped that this satisfactory result may be reached within the present year.

For the information of the audience, I give the names of the several gentlemen who have presided over the institution since its organization:

Hon. Millard Fillmore.....	1862 to 1867
Henry W. Rogers.....	1868
Rev. Dr. A. T. Chester.....	1869
O. H. Marshall.....	1870
Hon. N. K. Hall.....	1871
William H. Greene.....	1872
Orlando Allen... ..	1873

One of the pleasantest features connected with the Society, during the ten years of its existence, has been the Society club meetings during the winter season. These club meetings have been in the highest degree successful. Our citizens have thrown open their mansions freely for the use of the club, and papers have been prepared and read by gentlemen of the city, from all classes and professions, which will compare favorably with any of a similar character in any other city in the Union. Many of these papers have been published in pamphlet form, and nearly all have been placed on file, and it is the intention of the Society, as soon as it can command sufficient income to warrant the expense, to publish volumes of its transactions, embracing a portion of the papers read at the club meetings.



As I have before stated, the success of the Society has been the result of the steady faithfulness of its officers. It has been a labor of love with them, and the exhibition before you shows what can be accomplished by well-directed personal effort, with but little expenditure of money.

The valuable historical property in its possession has been accumulated from voluntary contributions of individuals; and now that the rooms are fire-proof, still larger and more valuable contributions may confidently be expected.

Such, briefly, is the history and progress of this Society to the present time, and its results thus far are before you.

We appeal to you now, and to both ladies and gentlemen, for your cordial co-operation in carrying out the intention of the Society, which is to collect and preserve memorials of our past and future history as a city, and of every family and inhabitant who has been or may be identified with its business pursuits, public institutions or social character. Whatever is deposited in these rooms will be as safe and well cared for as human prudence and foresight can suggest, and will be a standing monument to the history, progress and character of those who have contributed to its physical growth, and moral and intellectual condition.

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VIEW OF BUFFALO HARBOR.



# BUFFALO IN 1825.

REPRINTED FROM A PAMPHLET PUBLISHED IN THAT YEAR.

BY S. BALL.

THE VILLAGE OF BUFFALO, is situated at the eastern extremity of Lake Erie,\* in the State of New-York, north latitude  $42^{\circ} 50' 47''$  and longitude  $79^{\circ} 22' 37''$  west from Greenwich, on a beautiful height of ground, commanding an unlimited view of the lake, and its southern boundary on the one hand, and on the other, the variegated scenery of the Canadian shore, and the majestic Niagara, whose waters form that truly sublime cataract, Niagara Falls, at the distance of twenty miles north.

The eminence, on which the Village is situated, rises about fifty feet above the level of the Lake, and extends in a northern direction, declining gently to the east and west; at the southwest, the descent is from twenty to thirty feet, and somewhat

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\*This Lake derived its name from a tribe of Indians, who were exterminated (with the exception of a single individual) by the Senecas, at a great battle fought near the Grand River, Upper Canada, some 150 or 200 years ago. There are descendants of the person preserved at that time, now living in the Indian village, (so called) near this place.

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NOTE.—This pamphlet is now out of print, and very rare; one of the few copies extant being in the library of the Buffalo Historical Society. The title-page is as follows:

"Buffalo. in 1825: containing Historical and Statistical Sketches, illustrated with a View of the Harbor and Map of the Village. Buffalo: published by S. Ball. H. A. Salisbury, printer, 1825."

*Fac similes* of the View by the photo-lithographic process, and Map by the artotype process, accompany this republication, facing pp. 139 and 150, respectively.

For an interesting letter concerning the originals of these, the first copper-plates produced in Buffalo, see letter of Hon. Gideon J. Ball, of Erie, Pa., son of the author of the pamphlet, and engraver of the View and Map.—*post*, p. 151.

A prefatory note says: "THIS View was taken from the Terrace, between Willink



abrupt, to a flat of rich alluvial, not long since supposed to be an irreclaimable swamp; through which, now passes the Grand Erie Canal, and terminates in the Little Buffalo, a short distance from its confluence with Big Buffalo Creek, which never ceases to pay its accustomed tribute to the waters of Lake Erie.

The surrounding country is of a beautifully even surface, giving a view which appears to be limited only by the horizon. The soil in the Village, consists of dry sand, intermixed with gravel, affording more eligible building lots, than any place of its size in the State.

From whence originated the name of Buffalo, as applied to this place, the Author has not been able to learn; notwithstanding there are many stories, and some traditional tales on the subject, all of which are said to be equally true. The following one may not be uninteresting: At a period long before its first settlement, a party of French, bound up the Lake, in a batteau, sought shelter in the Creek; being short of provisions, despatched a hunting party, who, while in search of game, fell in with a horse, (belonging, probably, to a neighboring tribe of Indians,) that was soon made a sacrifice, by the hungry huntsmen, dressed, and taken to their companions, with the deceptive information, that it was the flesh of a Buffaloe, which they had killed. Hence came the name of Buffalo Creek, and consequently the Village. Whether true or not, the Author is unable to say.

The name *Te-u-shu-wa*, is that by which the Indians have

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Avenue and South Cayuga Street, near the line between the lots no. 30 and 31; the foreground exhibits the confluence of the Canal with the waters of Little Buffalo, and its final termination with the Lake through the medium of Big Buffalo Creek; the Light House, Pier, mouth of the Harbor, and shipping within; Lake Erie, with point Abino (in the Province of Upper Canada,) on the right, distant eleven miles, and Sturgeon point, (on the U. S. shore,) on the left, distant about fifteen miles. The distance between the two points may be about sixteen miles."

The author's preface is: "FROM the growing importance, the great demand, and daily inquiries by strangers for information in relation to the village of Buffalo; the Author has been induced to exhibit this work to the public, with a hope, that it may answer their purpose until such time as some other person, may take up the subject and do it more ample justice."—ED.

always known and called this place, anterior to its first settlement by the whites. My informant supposes it to be a corrupt Mohawk word, which literally signifies split basswood-bark; of which description of timber, there has been a great abundance on the margin of Buffalo Creek; from which adventitious circumstance, the word may probably have been derived. Or perhaps there may have been some peculiar circumstance relating to the mode of splitting or peeling the bark of this tree, that has caused the Indian word Te-u-shu-wa to be applied for a name.

The Indian name for the animal, *Buffaloe*, is Te-ge-yoh-ga, which places it beyond even the possibility of a doubt, that the name, Buffalo, (as applied to this place) is not of Indian origin.

The climate is more pleasant than any situation, in an equally northern latitude, in our country, and equally healthy. The Summers and Autumns are peculiarly fine; the Lake affords a gentle breeze during those seasons, much resembling a sea breeze, but of more elasticity and sweetness. The Winters are less uniform, than in most other parts of our country—the snow rarely falls to a greater depth than six inches; the cold is not so severe as in other places in the same latitude, situated remote from the Lake; yet in Winter, when the waters are covered with ice, the winds are often cold and piercing.

There are no diseases peculiar to the Village; it is quite exempt from local causes which produce bilious, remittent, and intermittent fevers, that prevail in many sections of the western part of the State.

The Spring season is variable; the changes of weather are often sudden, especially during the continuance of ice in the Lake, which probably has a tendency, in some instances, to produce chronic and inflammatory complaints.

The water is pure, and obtained entirely from wells, at a depth of from ten to fifty feet.

This place was included in the act of mutual cessions, be-



tween the States of Massachusetts and New-York, and by that act ceded to the former; by subsequent transfers, it came into the hands of the Holland Land Company, and was first surveyed in 1801, and began to settle in 1802. The settlement was slow, prior to the year 1810; from that period, until the commencement of the late war, in 1812, it was a flourishing country town, and continued so, until destroyed by a party of British and Indians, in the month of December, 1813, at which time it may be said to have been depopulated.

This seems to have first brought the place into notoriety; yet it nearly slumbered, in its ashes, until after the close of the war in 1815. The inhabitants then commenced rebuilding, notwithstanding they had just been reduced from affluence to indigence and want, by the conflagration, and with a hope and expectation, that the Government of the United States would remunerate them in whole, or part, for their losses; but being disappointed in these expectations, it completely paralyzed all kinds of business; a scene of insolvency ensued, more distressing, if possible, than even the destruction of the village.

Buffalo remained in much the same state, from that time until the year 1822, when it began to feel the inspiring and reviving influence of the progress of the Grand Canal, which raised its drooping spirits, gave business a fresh spring, and we may now very safely say, that there is not a more flourishing village in any part of our country. And what gives it an additional start at this time, is the long expected remuneration, from the Government of the United States, for losses sustained during the late war, which by an act of the last Congress, they are now enabled to realize, together with the revival of the Bank of Niagara, and the establishment of an Insurance Office, with a large surplus capital.

There are at present between 400 and 500 buildings, including dwelling houses, stores and mechanics' shops; and according to the census taken in January last, there were 2412 inhabitants, which is 317 more than the whole township of Buffalo,

including the village of Black-Rock, contained in the year 1820 according to the census then taken. Black-Rock now contains 1039 inhabitants.

Among the population there are four clergymen, seventeen attornies, nine physicians, three printers, who give employment to ten hands; two book-binders, four do.; four goldsmiths, three do.; three tin and copper smiths, sixteen do.; seven blacksmiths, seventeen do.; two cabinet makers, ten do.; three wheelwrights and coach builders, ten do.; two chair makers, five do.; one cooper, three do.; three hatters, eight do.; two tanners and curriers, nine do.; five boot and shoemakers, thirty-five do.; two painters, five do.; four tailors, twenty do.; one manufacturer of tobacco, two do.; fifty-one carpenters and joiners, nineteen masons and stone cutters, three butchers, and one brush maker.

It may be worthy of remark, that notwithstanding the eligibility of situation for a shipwright, or gunsmith, there is neither in the place. With these exceptions, Buffalo seems to be well supplied with the different branches of mechanics.

There are twenty-six dry good stores, thirty-six groceries, three hat stores, seven clothing do., four druggist do., one hardware do., six shoe do., one looking glass do., three jewelry do., three printing offices, two book stores and binderies, eleven houses of public entertainment, one rope walk, three tanneries, one brewery, one livery stable, eight store houses, one custom house, one reading room, one post office, one public library, one masonic hall, and one theatre, situated on lot no. 15; which has been conducted during the past year with a very considerable degree of ability.

The public buildings consist of a brick Court House, a very handsome designed building, but remains unfinished, situated upon an eminence on the east side of North Onondaga street, fronting Cazenovia Avenue, and is on the most commanding ground in the village.

A stone Gaol, standing on lot no. 185.



A Market House situated at the head of Stadnitski Avenue.

The Market is as well supplied as most country villages, with every thing in season and of a good quality, and it may not be unworthy of remark that the value of wheat is not known here, nor is there ever a bushel offered for sale; this is undoubtedly occasioned by the want of mills, or streams to set them upon, there being none within a less distance than eleven miles. There can be no hazard in saying, that surplus capital could not be better invested than in that of a Steam Grist Mill, nor would the establishment of any other factory be of equal advantage to the community.

The Niagara Bank is a large brick building, situated on North Onondaga, between Swan and Eagle streets.

The Buffalo Insurance Office is a large well finished three story brick building, on lot no. 35, Willink Avenue.

An Episcopal Church, built of wood, a good sized and well finished edifice, standing on lot no. 42.

A Presbyterian Meeting House, a very commodious building, situated on lot no. 43.

And a convenient Methodist Chapel, on lot no. 83.

There is one Young Ladies' School, one Young Gentlemen's Academy, and four Common Schools.

The lots, nos. 108, 109, 111 and 112, are occupied for a burying ground. The space left blank in the plan is Lands owned and reserved by Joseph Ellicott, Esq.

There are five religious congregations, one Episcopalian, one Presbyterian, one Methodist, one Baptist, and one Universalist.

Among the Societies and Institutions, there are five Religious, two Masonic, one Library, one Banking, and one Insurance.

There are four weekly Newspapers, to wit: The Buffalo Patriot, established in 1811; The Buffalo Journal, established in 1815; the Gospel Advocate, established in 1823; the Buffalo Emporium, established in 1824.

THE LIGHT HOUSE is built of stone, and situated on a low sandy point, near the confluence of the waters of Buffalo Creek

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OFFICE OF THE  
COMMISSIONER OF  
REVENUE

BILLI MATTO

OF  
THE  
REVENUE  
DEPARTMENT

REVENUE  
DEPARTMENT







and Lake Erie. The light is elevated about thirty feet above the ordinary Lake level, but is of no great use to mariners, in consequence of the smoke and mists of the village, settling along the margin of the waters, just about the elevation of the lantern, which almost totally obscures the light; except when so near as to see it beneath, or at so great a distance, that it may be seen over the vapor.

A private light is fixed at the pier head, for the use of the Steam Boat, and when lighted, can be seen when that of the Light House remains in perfect obscurity. This evil requires a remedy.

The Pier is built of wood and stone, commencing at the extremity of the sandy point, on which the Light House stands, extending in a westerly direction into the Lake, eighty-four rods, and averaging eighteen feet in width: it was built in 1819-20 and 21, for the purpose of preventing the accumulation of sands in the mouth of the Creek; and has so far answered the purpose, that there has been an uninterrupted and safe navigation (during the seasons) for the last three years, for any vessels that have navigated the Lake, and in any weather.

The buildings in the village are principally of wood, and not very compact, with the exception of Willink Avenue; this street is filled up, and is the most business part of the town. Vanstaphorst Avenue is built upon much beyond the extent of the map accompanying this work, and is the principal street that is travelled, in passing from east to west. There are many excellent buildings on north and south Onondaga streets; and north and south Cayuga and Tuscarora are equally well built upon, as are the streets running at right angles, consisting of Crow, Seneca, Swan, Eagle, and Mohawk streets, and Stadnitski, and Cazenovia Avenues.

The streets leading along the creeks, (which have not yet been favored even with a *Dutch* name) may be seen in the Summer season, to exhibit a bustle and hurry of business, not unlike a seaport; and which always accompanies the transfer and reshipment of property.



These streets are well built, with extensive and commodious ware-houses, and capacious docks, where the shipping lies undisturbed, and in perfect safety.

The shipping which belongs to this port, amounts to upwards of one thousand and fifty tons; among which are one Steam Boat, one Hermaphrodite Brig, eight Schooners, one Sloop; and four transportation boats, which average over twenty-five tons each; and a Steam Ferry Boat, which will commence running on the 1st of July next, between this place and Fort Erie; and is calculated to make a daily trip to Chippewa, on the Canada side, during the present Summer. Besides, there are numerous other water craft, of smaller dimensions.

There are upwards of sixty sail of good, substantial and safe vessels, owned upon this Lake, forty-two of which entered this port last season; and there were 286 arrivals, and an equal number of clearances.

In the month of March, 1803, the first mail was received here, and returned to Canandaigua, on horseback; and continued to be transported in this manner, every two weeks, until about the year 1805. A weekly route was then established, and continued until about the year 1809 or 10; it was then changed to a stage waggon, but was not very regular, prior to the latter year. It has subsequently been carried semi-weekly, and again three times a week; and for a number of years past, has been transported daily. There are now six different mail routes, leading to and from this place, and twenty regular mails are received and despatched every week, to wit: Seven to the east, via Canandaigua, carried in post coaches; seven north, via Black Rock, Niagara Falls, Lewiston, &c. carried in post coaches; three west, via Erie, Pa., carried in post coaches; one via Alden, to Moscow, on horseback; one via Aurora and Wales, to Moscow, in a stage waggon; one via Hamburg, to Olean, on horseback; and a mail received and returned by every trip of the Steam Boat Superior. Few places afford greater facilities for the accommodation and conveyance of travellers than this.

There are nine regular lines of Stages arriving and leaving here every day; three to the east, three to the north, and a morning and evening line to Black Rock, (meeting and transferring their passengers to a stage from the Canada shore) and one to the west; the carriages are principally post coaches.

Besides these daily conveyances, there is an extensive livery stable, where every kind of vehicle can be obtained, that are usually kept at such establishments.

There is also the steam brig *Superior*, of 346 tons burthen, whose accommodations have not been surpassed, making a trip to Detroit, a distance of nearly three hundred miles, every eight or nine days; and it is rare that a day passes during the season without the arrival or departure of some of the lake vessels, which generally have very good accommodations for passengers, and are well found.

The Indian reservation is situated east of this village about two miles, and lies in an oblong form, containing eighty-three thousand five hundred and fifty-seven acres of the first quality of land.

The Indian village, (so called) is upon these lands; strangers are often impelled by curiosity to visit this place, and as often return dissatisfied and disgusted, after travelling over a rough road three miles, to see a few detached Indian wigwams, and fields, in a rude and imperfect state of cultivation.

Their population is between nine and ten hundred.

Among the principal chiefs are Red Jacket, who evidently possesses more native talent than any other: proud of his nation, jealous of his rights—a penetrating and discriminating mind, and more influence in the national councils than any other chief, and as much gifted in oratory as was the late and noted Patrick Henry.

Capt. Pollard, who is an advocate for civilization and the Christian religion.

Young King, a man of good calculation, and as good a judge of the value of property as any man.



Little Billy, Astride Town, and Seneca White, neither of whom are so destitute of talent as to be a discredit to the title of chief.

Many, no doubt, indulge themselves in visionary speculations, founded upon the future prospects of the Village of Buffalo. That it will, at no very remote period, rival the largest inland town in America, in point of business and opulence, seems to be a point conceded: but that it will mature with the rapidity of a mushroom, or rise in magnificence like the enchanted palace, (as many imagine) I am not yet credulous enough to believe. It is true, the advantages are commanding; it has a fine climate, a rich adjacent country, and it may be well said to be the key of the Western Lakes, which open to our artificial rivers the growing commerce of that vast region of country, bordering south and west, upon the most extensive inland seas on the globe.

To enter minutely into a calculation of the probable extent of this commerce, at the expiration of twenty or forty years, would exceed the limits prescribed by a work intended merely as a brief hint at its future greatness, if, indeed, it were possible to arrive at a satisfactory result. When we contemplate the progress of the settlements in Ohio, the western parts of Pennsylvania and New-York, for the last twenty years; when we view the daily increasing current of emigration; the immense prostration of the forests, yielding to the industry of the husbandman; the hardihood and intelligence of those who are making the "wilderness blossom;" we can hardly limit the imagination to the extent of the wealth and population which will ultimately be comprehended within those vastly fertile regions. But that their surplus products will be wafted to this place, and bartered for other commodities, or reshipped on board Canal Boats, for an eastern market, there can be no doubt; and there can be as little doubt, that upon the extent and profits of this commerce, is based the future prosperity and opulence of this village.

It is less than twenty-five years since this place presented to the view of man, a single trace of civilization. In 1813, as has been before observed, it was totally destroyed by the enemy, and it is very evident that this indiscriminate destruction was unavoidably succeeded by pecuniary embarrassments peculiarly distressing. Under these circumstances it can be hardly necessary to add, that its growth has been retarded by the poverty and distress of its suffering inhabitants. But for the last three years there has been a flattering increase of population, and not less flattering is the general industry and perseverance with which their several vocations are pursued.

The village was first surveyed, and the first sales of lots made by the ex-agent of the Holland Land Company, and by him and others employed in the office, the most eligible situations for business were engrossed, and will not probably be sold or but partially improved during the life time of its present owners. This is a serious impediment to its growth, and one which there is too much reason to apprehend will not be readily removed.

The doubts existing in relation to the place of the termination of the canal, or rather its connection with the Niagara river, have unquestionably retarded the increase of the village, but not to any considerable extent: without touching upon the merits of this unpleasant controversy, there is nothing hazarded in the opinion that no injury will result from the course pursued by the present canal board. Should inconvenience arise, the legislature will certainly remove them. Every thing relating to the Canal and Lake navigation at this place is now within the grasp of individual enterprise. Should the present works terminate as unfortunately as has been predicted by those who condemned it at its commencement, the disasters resulting therefrom will no doubt be promptly relieved by the public. It would present to the state a case of such magnitude, that neither local partialities, political prepossessions, private interests, nor personal animosities, would be likely



ever to turn the ears of the representatives of the people, from the calls of justice, or to close their eyes upon the demonstrations of experience; nor permit the delay of the completion of a work, at which every state in the union, and even the nations of Europe, are looking with admiration.

#### STATEMENT OF DISTANCES.

Buffalo is in longitude  $9^{\circ} 9' 37''$  west from Portland, in the State of Maine.

From Boston,	-	-	-	-	$8^{\circ} 18' 37''$ west.
Quebec,	-	-	-	-	8 17 37
New-York,	-	-	-	-	5 14 37
Philadelphia,	-	-	-	-	4 13 37
Washington City,	-	-	-	-	2 6 37
New-Orleans,	-	-	-	-	10 46 23 east.

The distance from Washington City, according to the post route is 431 miles.

From New York city,	-	-	-	-	446	} by water.
Albany,	-	-	-	-	296	
Utica,	-	-	-	-	200	
Canandaigua,	-	-	-	-	88	
Batavia,	-	-	-	-	39	
Niagara Falls,	-	-	-	-	22	
Lewiston,	-	-	-	-	29	
Fort Niagara,	-	-	-	-	37	
Olean,	-	-	-	-	74	
Detroit,	-	-	-	-	290	
Sandusky,	-	-	-	-	240	}
Cleveland,	-	-	-	-	180	
Erie,	-	-	-	-	80	
New Orleans,	-	-	-	-	1392	
Pittsburgh,	-	-	-	-	210	

[LETTER FROM THE HON. GIDEON J. BALL.]

ERIE, February 8th, 1876.

O. H. MARSHALL, ESQ., Buffalo, N. Y.

DEAR SIR:—Our search has been crowned with success. Two copies of the pamphlet, “Buffalo in 1825,” have been found. They show age. I send you the more perfect one. Several copies of the picture, “View of Buffalo Harbor,” were found also. I send you one of them. The “View of Buffalo Harbor,” and the Map of the Village, were the *first* copper-plate engravings *done in Buffalo*. In your city you have skill’d engravers—accomplished artists—who may laugh at the rude work of that day, 1825. A proper study of the period, and a knowledge of the attending difficulties, I am persuaded, will cause them to hesitate before they condemn.

S. Ball was not an engraver—never claimed to be—but, with a pencil, he sketched well and cleverly.

After the completion of his drawings, he corresponded with engravers in the city of New York, and to his surprise, found their charges so high, and the difficulties of distance so great, that he was disposed for a time to give up his hobby—for on his part it was a hobby.

After reflection, he resolved to do the work himself. Copper was procured;—the plates were hammered to firmness, and by infinite rubbing, their surfaces were finished so that they presented polished planes.

S. Ball then set himself to the work, and by persevering effort, succeeded in transferring to the copper the pictures he had drawn with his pencil.

When the engravings were completed—it is amusing to remember with what innocence of purpose—the plates were carried to the “Buffalo Patriot” printing office: up stairs at north-east corner of *Vanstaphorst Avenue* and Eagle street. The plates were duly put on the printing press, when earnest and repeated efforts were made to get impressions—but the pictures came not.

Then it was learned that newspaper printing presses would not give impressions from engraved copper-plates. Here was a dilemma. How to overcome the difficulty was the next study. Books were consulted. They taught that such work could be done only on a copper-plate printing press, with large, *lignum-vitæ* rollers, an upper and lower one, etc., etc. Such rollers were not to be had in Buffalo; to procure them from abroad was out of the question. Mechanics who had a knowledge of timber were consulted; they agreed that buttonwood was the best substitute. Accordingly, a buttonwood-tree of suitable diameter was cut down, and two large rollers, turned in a lathe, were soon provided, as also a bed-plate to run between



them ; in this manner a copper-plate printing press was fabricated. And on that press the picture and map in the pamphlet, "Buffalo in 1825," were printed. I will add that when the printing came to be done, newspaper ink was used, and it proved to be unfitted for the work,—was unsatisfactory in every respect.

Authorities were again consulted, when it was learned that there was an ink, known as copper-plate printers' ink, and the books furnished instructions how to make it.

The proper ingredients were procured, ink made, and by its use the pictures came from the press of a better and darker color. This was book or picture making under difficulties. The larger part of the edition was given away; a limited number were sold at twenty-five cents each. I think I am safe in saying that not five (5) per cent. of the cost of the work was ever realized by S. Ball. On his part it was a hobby—a labor of love, and he gratified it.

Very truly yours,

GIDEON J. BALL.

P. S.—I read the pamphlet to-day,—after a pause of fifty years ! It recalled to memory occurrences connected therewith. I have ventured to mention some of them. This writing, I confess, has afforded me a brief period of relief (I am an invalid—write slow, and with difficulty), yet I fear the reading of my letter may prove to be a tax on your time and patience; if so, I trust you will pardon the liberty I have taken.

BALL.

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# EARLY REMINISCENCES OF BUFFALO AND VICINITY.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, MARCH 19, 1866.

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BY JAMES L. BARTON.\*

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To all well-informed persons it is known that the revolutionary war was closed in 1783. By the treaty of peace between Great Britain and the Independent States of America, it was agreed that the territory extending from the forty-fifth degree of north latitude, at a point where it intersects the St. Lawrence river, thence through the middle of the river and great lakes to the Lake of the Woods, far beyond Lake Superior, should belong to the United States. The line of division was only generally marked out and indicated in the treaty. Its precise locality was surveyed and marked off, after the war of 1812, by commissioners representing each government, during the years from 1818 to 1825.

Notwithstanding the fact that this treaty conceded the right to us to occupy the country, and an equal right to navigate the lakes and rivers, the British government retained armed possession until 1796, thirteen years after peace had been concluded. They had garrisons at Oswego, Niagara, Lewiston, Schlosser, Fort Miami on the Maumee river, ten miles inland

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\* Died, October 6th, 1869.



from where the city of Toledo now stands, and at Detroit. The use of the great lakes was entirely prohibited to us; and a strong disposition was manifested to deter people from exploring the country, or approaching the Niagara frontier. To make this as disagreeable and unsafe as possible to travelers or explorers, the commanding officer at Fort Niagara gave directions to the Indians, then very numerous and much under the influence of the British government, that if they found any strange white men traveling over the country, they were to be considered British deserters, and were to be arrested and brought to the Fort, unless they could show the commander's pass, which was a large wax impression on a card, and which was distributed among the Indians.

The military retention of the country bordering on the great lakes, as well as that of the lakes themselves, was not as injurious to the people of this state as to those of Ohio. Here it gave little annoyance. There were but few people in these parts, and they had no business to do on the lakes. The highest compliment the descendants of the early pioneers into Western New York can pay to the memory of their forefathers, grows out of what I am now going to relate.

All the predatory incursions of the British and Indians during the war of the Revolution, that laid waste the valley of the Mohawk, Minnisink in Orange county, and Wyoming in Pennsylvania, were concocted at and started from Fort Niagara. These incursions were broken up and forever terminated by General Sullivan's expedition in 1779. The only great battle fought by Sullivan against the Indians assisted by their English friends, many of whom were in the battle, was at Newtown, now Elmira. The Indians and their allies were defeated, and never attempted to face Sullivan in battle again, but retired further west. Sullivan pursued them, destroying their towns, apple-trees, and almost every thing that could sustain human life, as far as the Genesee river, on both sides of which he laid everything waste for several miles. The winter following was

very cold, and much snow fell; large numbers of deer perished in the woods, and many Indians died of starvation and cold.

In eight or ten years after the expedition of Sullivan, the whites, in considerable numbers, began coming into the country. The Indians, still smarting from the punishment inflicted upon them by Sullivan, and being much the most numerous, were very suspicious of the white intruders, and were ready to take revenge if a proper occasion offered. The high-toned character which the early pioneers brought with them, their frank, honest and upright conduct in all their transactions with the Indians, soon impressed the minds of the Indians with the belief that the whites came amongst them as friends and not as enemies. And so harmoniously have they lived together that not a shot has been fired in battle or anger between the whites and Indians, since 1779. The mention of these facts is a monument to the memory of those noble men, the early pioneers; and their descendants may well be proud of them. How sadly different it was in Ohio, I will now tell you.

The retention of the military posts around the great lakes, one of which was several miles inland in Ohio, kept up a bitter and angry feeling between the early white settlers of that state and the Indians, who were largely under the malign influence of British agents, which was frequently manifested in the entrance of the white settlements by small Indian parties, burning buildings and committing many murders. The whites were a different class of men from those who first settled Western New York. Instead of cultivating good feelings, they retaliated whenever an occasion offered; and thought the killing of an Indian of no more consequence than that of a wild turkey, or a deer. Thus matters continued to grow worse until the Indians determined to drive the whites south of the Ohio river. This brought out a considerable military force under the command of Colonel Crawford, who had a fight with the Indians near Tyamoctee creek, about thirty-five miles south of Lower Sandusky. Crawford was defeated, many of his men killed,



himself carried prisoner to an Indian town on the Tyamoctee, a few miles west of the place where the fight took place, where he was burned at the stake. Another and larger expedition was organized and took the field under the command of General Hamer. He was also defeated in a fight with the Indians, within one hundred miles north of Cincinnati. This called out a still larger but badly organized force, under command of General St. Clair. His army was surprised and dreadfully defeated by the Indians, on the morning of November 4th, 1791, near where Hamer had met the same fate. A large number of men were killed and wounded, and a complete rout took place. Many distinguished officers fell on that occasion, amongst others the celebrated Colonel Butler.

Early in the spring of 1794, a formidable expedition, under the command of the celebrated General Wayne, was organized and started from Cincinnati, then called Fort Washington, to chastise the Indians wherever they could be found. This expedition cautiously pushed forward through the woods, taking the route, or nearly so, of St. Clair. On reaching the battlefield of the latter with the Indians, Wayne erected a fort, to which he gave the name of Fort Recovery. From this place the army entered the unbroken wilderness, marching with great caution, and giving the Indians no opportunity to attack with the hope of success. The Indians kept retiring as Wayne advanced. After a toilsome march through the wilderness, the army reached the mouth of the Auglaise river, where it unites with the Maumee. Here Wayne built a military work, and called it Fort Defiance. Resting and refreshing his men after their laborious march through the woods, Wayne prepared to descend the Maumee river in pursuit of the Indians. Using the river to transport, in canoes and boats prepared for the purpose, such supplies as he needed, the army marched down on the west side of the river, and gave protection to the boats.

On approaching within three or four miles of Fort Miami, one of the British military posts, he found the Indians, more

than two thousand in number, strongly posted in a wooded place, their left resting on the river, and their right protected by thick and high grass, which grew luxuriantly on the river bottom. On finding his enemy, Wayne halted, arranged his men, and made up his mind for serious work. His orders were for his infantry to enter the wood, give one fire, and then push on with the bayonet to rouse the Indians from their cover behind the fallen timber; and as soon as they were all brought into sight, his cavalry was to dash in. On the approach of Wayne, the Indians received him with a heavy fire from behind logs and trees, where they were concealed. Wayne's orders were fully carried out; and so furious was his attack, that the Indians could not stand it; and after losing many, they broke and fled, and gathered around the British fort. Wayne delayed not a moment in pursuing them, and when he had approached within a short distance of the fort, he sent a courier to Colonel Hamilton, the commandant, informing him that he, Wayne, was in hot pursuit of his enemy, whom he had just defeated; that the commander of the fort must not admit them within it, nor furnish them with anything; and that if he did, he should consider him as a common enemy, and attack the fort. Colonel Hamilton replied in a high tone, deprecating the serious consequences that might follow the assaulting a fort of His Majesty King George. Wayne gave him distinctly to understand, that any assistance he rendered the Indians would be at his peril. Colonel Hamilton thought discretion the better part of valor, and left the Indians to their fate. All hope of contending any longer was lost, and their only resource for arms and ammunition being cut off, they craved mercy and gave up. Wayne granted this upon condition that the various tribes engaged in the war against him should, the next spring, send representatives to meet commissioners on the part of the United States, at such place as the government should determine, for the purpose of making a general treaty of peace.

This meeting took place at Greenville, Dark county, Ohio,



adjoining the State of Indiana. A general treaty of peace was made between the contracting parties, since which time Ohio has been quite free from Indian disturbances.

The Indians ceded to the United States six miles square at Lower Sandusky (now Fremont); six miles square at Fort Wayne on the Wabash river; six miles square at Chicago, and the island of Michilimackinac. At Sandusky, Fort Wayne and Chicago, the government erected stockades, or slight forts, and storehouses within them, from which places there were annually distributed cloth, tobacco, pipes, wampum, shot-guns, powder and shot, vermilion, beads, and numerous other articles stipulated in the treaty as annuities. Judge Samuel Tupper, who afterwards became a resident of this city, was the United States agent when I first went to Lower Sandusky in 1811.

Several young officers serving with General Wayne became afterwards distinguished as military men and civilians. President Harrison, General Hugh Brady, General Covington, who was killed in battle in Canada in the fall of 1813, on the St. Lawrence river, and Captain Robert Lee, the first Collector of the Customs District of Niagara, were all sub-Lieutenants under Wayne. General Solomon Van Rensselaer, who was Captain of a horse company, and was shot through the body in the battle, was for several years Postmaster at Albany, and represented that district one or two terms in Congress. Brigadier-General James Wilkinson was the second in command under Wayne, and subsequently the Commander-in-chief of the Northern Army, in 1813. With all these gentlemen I had the honor of a personal acquaintance, and with some of them a very familiar one.

During the year 1794, Chief Justice Jay was sent to England to represent to that government the absolute necessity and propriety on their part, of fully executing the treaty of 1783, by giving up the forts and withdrawing their troops from our rightful territory, which they had so long unjustly withheld from us, and giving us free access to, and the use of the lakes. Our

minister accomplished his object, and the treaty then made is known as Jay's treaty.

Notwithstanding this new treaty, two more years passed before we obtained full possession of our rights on land and water. On the fourth of July, 1796, as I have been told by some of those who were present on the occasion, Fort Niagara was given up, and the troops withdrawn, as well as those at Lewiston and Schlosser. On the eleventh of July, Captain Moses Porter, with sixty-five men from Fort Miami, on the Maumee, took possession of Detroit.

During all the above time, and up to 1806, the communication between New York and the western country was in small bateaux or boats, called "Schenectady boats." These were propelled by poles up the Mohawk river, wagoned with their contents around the short portage at Little Falls, and the longer one between Mohawk and Wood creek (until the Inland Lock Navigation Company constructed canals and locks at these points, which was between 1792 and 1797), and taken down this creek into Oneida lake, and through that lake and river to Three River Point, where the Oneida unites with the Seneca river. These two form the Oswego river. Another portage had to be passed at Oswego Falls, and the river was then used to Oswego, on the bank of Lake Ontario. Here the property was unladen from the boats and put into vessels for Lewiston or Queenstown. The property and supplies required for the troops at Schlosser and Lewiston, were landed at the latter place. All for Detroit and other western places was landed at Queenstown, and wagoned around the portage to Chippewa. Here it was laden into boats and carried to Fort Erie, from whence it was distributed in vessels to the several places to which it was destined.

In 1790, the first United States census was taken. The territory extending from the eastern line of Steuben county, adjoining Pennsylvania, to the eastern line of Wayne county, resting on Lake Ontario, and westward to Lake Erie, was one



county, Ontario, now subdivided into fourteen counties. The entire white population then amounted to one hundred and five families, containing one thousand eighty-one persons, located as follows:

Township.	Range.		Families.	Persons.	Township.	Range.		Families.	Persons.
2	1	Painted Post,	10	59	11	4	Victor,	4	20
7	1	Milo.	11	65	9	5	Richmond,	1	2
8	1	Benton,	3	25	11	5	Mendon,	2	10
9	1	Seneca,	10	60	12	5	Pittsford,	8	28
10	1	Geneva,	8	55	13	5	Brighton,	4	20
11	1	Phelps,	2	11	10	6	Lima,	4	23
8	2	Middlesex,	7	38	11	6	Rush,	9	56
10	2	North Gorham,	6	14	12	6	Henrietta,	1	8
11	2	E. Farmington,	2	4	7	7	Sparta,	1	5
11	3	W. do.	12	55	9	7	Geneseo,	8	34
10	3	Canandaigua,	18	106	1	2	Erwin,	11	59
12	3	West Palmyra,	4	14	2	2			
8	4	South Bristol,	4	20	3	5	Canisteo,	10	50
9	4	North do.	3	13	4	6			
10	5	W. Bloomfield,	7	26	5	2	Wayne,	1	9
10	4	E. do.	11	65	10	7	Avon,	10	66
Caledonia								10	44
Indian Lands, Leicester								4	17
								105	1081

The first American vessel that was permitted to float on these great lakes was constructed at Erie, Pennsylvania, and came out in 1797. It was called the *Washington*, and was afterwards drawn over the portage from Chippewa to Queenstown. In her first attempt to navigate Lake Ontario she foundered, and all on board were lost. She never was seen or heard of after passing the mouth of the river.

It will be noticed that thus far the name of Buffalo has not been mentioned. For simply this reason, there was no Buffalo. There was a Buffalo creek and a Buffalo Indian reservation. It was well known to early travelers, that on the bank of this creek, not far from Lake Erie, were a few log buildings, where rum, silver trinkets, beads and other small articles were sold to the Indians. This trade was small; the great mart for Indian trade was at British Niagara. Here was the headquarters of the Indian Department, from which the subsidies given and sold to the Indians, were distributed.

We now approach more directly the early history of Buffalo. In 1803, our late worthy, useful, and much respected citizen, Doctor Cyrenius Chapin, then a young physician in pursuit of a place in which to locate himself, came, with his wife, to this place. The village not being surveyed, he could not obtain a lot. He crossed over to Fort Erie, where a number of troops were stationed, and a good many civilians were settled along the river. There he found good practice and remained two years.

In 1804, Joseph Ellicott surveyed out the village plot of Buffalo. In 1805, Doctor Chapin left Fort Erie; came to Buffalo and purchased the lot on the corner of Main and Swan streets, extending through to Pearl street, upon which he lived until his death, in 1838, and which is now occupied by one of his worthy descendants.

Whether the fact was known to Congress, that the spot upon which the great city of Buffalo was to be built, was surveyed and laid out into lots, does not appear. If it was, they did not give the name of Buffalo to the customs district which extends from the Niagara Falls to the Pennsylvania state line, where it joins the District of Erie, but gave it the name of "Buffaloe Creek District." This statute was passed on the fifth of March, 1805. Although the ground was surveyed where a great city was to be built, there were then as yet no materials of which to build one. Buffalo was then very much in the condition of the man who had a beautiful mill-site on his farm, but had no water.

The State of New York owned a strip of land, one mile wide, lying along the bank of the Niagara river, from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, called the "Mile Strip." In 1803 and 1804 this land was surveyed according to the following directions of the Surveyor-General:

One mile square was to be left at the mouth of the river where Fort Niagara was situated, for garrison purposes. The survey was to commence one mile from Lake Ontario, and lay



out the whole strip into farm lots, averaging one hundred and sixty to one hundred and seventy-five acres each, taking into consideration the windings of the river, except at the following places: At Lewiston, a village plot one mile square was to be laid out. Here was the lower end of the portage around the falls, where the State owned a storehouse and dock. The upper end of the portage was on what was known as the Steadman farm. This farm was to be left intact; also the two-mile square below and adjoining the Scajaquadda creek, known as the Jones and Parrish tracts—on part of the latter of which, the Parrish tract, North Buffalo is built. After crossing the creek, four more lots were to be laid out. Then one hundred acres above and adjoining these lots were to be surveyed, and called the "Ferry Lot." The triangle formed by a line running from a point where the south line of the ferry lot struck the mile line, to the river, not far from the present water-works, was to be reserved for military purposes, should it become necessary. The residue of the Mile Strip extending to the village of Buffalo, was to be surveyed into a village plot and called Black Rock. This was afterwards more generally known as Upper Black Rock.

In 1805, all the surveyed land, farm and village lots, were put up by the Surveyor-General for public sale at Albany. Notice was also given that the docks and warehouses at Lewiston and Schlosser, with the Steadman farm at the latter place, would be leased by the State to any responsible party or parties, who would take them for the least number of years, maintain and keep up the storehouses and docks, and at the termination of the lease surrender all the improvements to the State. At the time of the sale, Augustus and Peter B. Porter, my father Benjamin Barton, and my uncle Joseph Annin, who surveyed the Mile Strip, attended for the purpose of purchasing lands along the river, and bidding for the lease. In a conversation among themselves, and finding out each other's views and purposes, they agreed to form a partnership under the

name of Porter, Barton & Co., and to bid for the portage lease, and also to make large purchases of lands. They succeeded in obtaining the lease for thirteen years, and purchased the land around the falls, and many other farm and village lots.

The four farm lots, containing over seven hundred acres, lying on the south side of Scajaquadda creek, were purchased by these four gentlemen and the Rev. John McDonald, of Albany, father-in-law of Archibald McIntyre, many years Comptroller of the State, and John McLean, of Orange county, for a long time Commissary-General. In 1811, they had these lots surveyed into a village plot by Apollos Stephens, and called it Black Rock. To distinguish it from the state village of Black Rock, it was better known subsequently as Lower Black Rock.

In the fall of 1805, Augustus Porter came out from Canandaigua and built a saw-mill at the Falls. He removed with his family, in the spring of 1806, to Fort Schlosser, and lived four or five years in the old English mess-house. That summer my father came out (he did not remove his family to Lewiston until the spring of 1807), and assisted in erecting a large grist-mill at the Falls. As it was a large frame and difficult to raise, and as men were scarce, the commandant at Fort Niagara permitted some of the soldiers at the fort to go up and assist in putting up the frame. The same year, Porter, Barton & Co. commenced the transportation business over the portage, boating up the river to Black Rock; and provided themselves with vessels to carry property on the lakes. This was the beginning of the first regular and connected line of transportation on the American side, that ever did business on these great waters. They were connected with Jonathan Walton & Co., of Schenectady, who sent the property in boats up the Mohawk river, down Wood creek and other waters to Oswego; Matthew McNair carried it over Lake Ontario; Porter, Barton & Co. took it from Lewiston to Black Rock, where they had vessels to carry it over the lakes. I went into my father's warehouse



in 1807, to make out way-bills, or slips, for the teams carrying salt and other property across the portage; and you now see in my person the man who was earlier engaged in the commerce of these lakes than any other man now living.

Before the war of 1812, Porter, Barton & Co. built a large pier and placed upon it a structure sufficiently large to store all property requiring it, immediately below Bird Island, above the rapids in the Niagara river. Here all the property brought from Schlosser in boats was landed, and here the vessels used to stop and anchor in deep and still water, and discharge and take in freight. After the war, they descended the river and came to the docks below the rapids. When they were ready to go on to the lake, if the wind was not strong enough to take them up with their sails, cattle and horses were used to haul them up. This was known as the "horn breeze," in contradistinction to the "ash" or oar breeze, and the natural wind.

In the winter of 1812-13, five of the vessels composing part of Commodore Perry's fleet were fitted for war vessels out of merchantmen, in Scajaquadda creek. In June, 1813, after Col. Preston with some troops had taken possession of the opposite side of the river and the enemy's batteries, these vessels came out of the creek into the river, and after waiting two or three days, were favored with a sufficiently strong wind, sailed up the rapids, and joined Perry at Erie.

In 1815, Porter, Barton & Co. built a warehouse at Black Rock, nearly opposite the present Queen City Mills. It has since been removed, and is now used as a barn and stables.

In March, 1816, the forwarding and commission house of Sill, Thompson & Co., of which I was a member, took possession, and occupied it until March, 1821. It furnished ample storage for all the property requiring to be put under shelter, going to, or coming from the West, during that time. It would hardly afford sufficient storage room for the business of the present day! The whole business of a season then, did not equal in value or quantity, what is now done in a single day on

our docks, during the busy season of the year. To give you an idea how large the business we were doing then appeared to the public, we were called a "monopoly" and an "overgrown monopoly," not satisfied with doing all the commercial business, but trying to control the politics of the county and district.

In 1808, the County of Niagara was set off from Genesee, and comprised the territory of the present counties of Erie and Niagara. Buffalo was made the county seat, which gave it a little help forward, by increasing its trade and population. The regular terms of the courts brought in a good many persons, not only from different parts of the county, but from other counties, who had business in the courts. Court week was a big week, and was always welcomed by the citizens, for the large trade it brought into the village.

In June, 1812, the war with Great Britain commenced. The gathering of troops on this frontier, and the expenditure of public money during that year, gave a wonderful spur to the hopes and exertions of the citizens, and the village presented a lively business appearance. In the high exulting feelings of its citizens, Buffalo was already a great city. It had overcome its worst difficulties, and nothing could stop its onward progress.

In 1813, the troops were, in a great measure, removed from Buffalo and operated in Canada. The impetus given to trade the year before continued, and hopes and confidence were high. But the year closed most disastrously upon the village and its citizens. A large British force, accompanied by many Canadian and Western Indians, crossed the Niagara river in December and laid waste the entire frontier from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie. Buffalo was sacked and plundered, several of its citizens killed, and finally fire was applied, and all the buildings, except two or three, were consumed. This was on the thirtieth and thirty-first of December, 1813. Here was swift destruction to all high hopes and fancied greatness. The citizens were compelled to flee, many half-clothed, from the mur-



derous tomahawk of the Indian, while the pathway of their escape was lighted by the blaze of their own dwellings. In one hour's time, the hard earnings and savings of years were taken from them, and many were left with nothing but their naked hands and good health with which to provide for the wants of their families. The enemy retired to Canada immediately after the destruction had been committed. A very severe winter followed the destruction of Buffalo, which caused much distress to many of its people who had lost their all, and were compelled to seek shelter and food as best they could.

In the spring of 1814 the people began to return, and a few plain buildings were constructed. The army came into Buffalo the first week of April, and brought a large trade to the place; but, as is always the case, it was followed by a caravan of traders almost as numerous as the troops, who more than divided this trade with the citizens. Soon were to be seen board shanties, erected where the First Presbyterian church and St. Paul's cathedral now stand, and along Pearl and Main streets. The village was literally one of shanties, and every thing had a lively and busy appearance.

The army remained in Buffalo until the second of July at night, when it crossed into Canada. Many of those who for trading purposes followed the army into Buffalo, left it when the troops did—some to follow them, and some to the places from whence they came,—and the citizens, who had by this time generally returned, were left more to themselves. Trade flourished. The wants of the army required large supplies, some of which the country around could furnish, and others were brought by land from Albany, and other parts of the state. The large sums of money paid to the soldiers, who scattered it freely, made money plenty, and all felt well, because they had plenty to do, and got high prices. Buffalo was now certainly mounting upwards, and nothing could retard her progress. Her people were jubilant, and talked largely of seeing it in twenty years the largest city in the state west of New York.

The war was closed by a treaty of peace, concluded by the agents of the contending parties, at Ghent, in December, 1814, and subsequently ratified by both governments. The news of the signing of the treaty did not reach Buffalo until about the seventeenth of February, 1815, and at the same time we got intelligence of General Jackson's great victory in the battle of New Orleans, fought on the eighth of January. All military operations on this frontier ceased, the army was removed from here as fast as it could be done, and the last soldier left the place in May or June. With them went the hosts of adventurers that always follow in the track of an army.

The citizens were again thrown upon their own resources, trade was limited, provisions scarce and very high, the great flow of money had ceased, and it was becoming hard work for many to get along. Many had gotten into debt while money was very plenty, and others had not sufficiently recovered from their losses consequent upon the entire destruction of the village a year and a half before. This condition of things continued for four or five years. The village, if it increased, increased so slowly that the change was scarcely perceptible, and the buildings erected were of an unpretending kind. Even as late as 1820, the population of Buffalo numbered but two thousand and ninety-three. Buffalo had as yet no water commerce. Although it was a port of entry by law, it was not so in fact, for no vessel could get into the harbor. The merchandise brought by teams from Albany destined westward, after its arrival here, was taken to Black Rock to be shipped across the lake.

On the first of November, 1821, the steamboat *Walk-in-the-Water*, built in 1818, at Black Rock, was driven ashore by a storm and wrecked on the beach, about a mile above the lighthouse. During the ensuing winter a new boat called the *Superior*, was built on the bank of Buffalo creek above Main street. This was the first vessel, certainly of any size, built in Buffalo. Although some slight work had been done the year before, to open the channel at the mouth of the creek, the sand



bars partially removed, and the water deepened so as to admit small craft to enter, it was not yet in a condition to admit vessels of a large draft of water. On this account the owners and builders of the *Superior* hesitated about building the boat here, fearing she could not get into the lake. They were assured that there would be no difficulty; that the spring freshet would clear the channel; and further, that a guarantee would be given by responsible citizens to pay one hundred dollars for every day the boat was detained on this account after she was ready to go on the lake.

When the boat was nearly ready, much anxiety began to be felt about her passing out of the creek. This called forth the energy of the citizens. They assembled daily in large numbers—merchants, lawyers and laborers alike; and those who could not work sent refreshments,—with teams, scrapers, shovels and other necessary tools, and labored most industriously to remove so much of the bar as to permit the new steamboat to get out and return into the harbor. Success was vital to the village, and its people put forth their best energies to accomplish it. The boat got out after meeting with some obstruction by touching the bar; but by carrying out an anchor ahead, and taking a turn of the cable around the shaft of the engine, and both working together, she got into the lake. After making a few miles run, to try the working of the engine, she returned with less difficulty. The obstructions at the mouth of the creek were steadily worked at until a passage was made sufficiently large and deep to admit her going in and out, and she afterwards continued to run from this place.

As the canal was approaching its western termination, the question whether it should stop at Black Rock or be continued to Buffalo, became a matter of great discussion. Black Rock then had all the American commerce on the lakes. Buffalo had comparatively none. I then lived at Black Rock; and, as all my property and hopes were there, I, with the rest of our citizens, thought we had a right to retain this commerce if we

could. A violent and bitter controversy arose between the two places. Buffalo for a while had the advantage, having two newspapers; but we soon set one up at Black Rock, and much abuse, misrepresentation, and violent invective passed between them.

In 1822, at a meeting of the canal commissioners, they decided to give us at Black Rock an opportunity of testing, by experiment, whether a wooden pier filled with stone, placed in the swiftest part of the rapids of the river, would stand the current, and the rushing down of the ice from the lake when it broke up in the spring. We eagerly accepted the proposition, and went to work that summer, and did put down what was known as the "Experiment Pier," in a very exposed position. When the ice in the lake broke up in the spring and came rushing down the river, day after day many citizens of Black Rock and others from Buffalo could be found perched on the high bank of the river, the former watching intensely the fate of their experiment, and hoping it would stand, while the latter were anxious to see it swept away. The pier passed the trial in safety, and this decided the canal commissioners to construct a harbor at Black Rock. This decision brought the two villages quite on a level. Buffalo had the most people; we at Black Rock had the control of the lake commerce, and our numbers were increasing daily. As an evidence of this, I will mention that the late Captain Sheldon Thompson, his brother Harry and myself purchased in 1823, from the Holland Land Company, one hundred and thirty-three and one-third feet on the creek, where General Reed's elevator now stands, for about one hundred and seventy dollars. In after years this ground was sold for forty thousand dollars.

In 1825, the population of Buffalo was two thousand six hundred. After all these struggles and trials, the opening of the Grand Erie Canal connecting the great lakes of the West with the Atlantic ocean was completed, and put courage into the hearts of the people. Joy and gladness were to be seen in



the countenances of all. Notwithstanding, the struggle to live and move ahead was still to continue. The opening of the canal was a most marked era in the history of Buffalo. It laid the foundation of a great city; but the materials for building it were not in existence. The great West was comparatively an unbroken wilderness, and although commerce was considerably increased by the canal, it was yet quite limited, and for a short time divided with Black Rock.

In May, 1826, the pier forming the harbor at that place, constructed without proper care, gave way near where the ferry now is, and forever blasted the prospects of making that locality a harbor for a large commercial business.

In the spring of 1827, I left Black Rock, came to Buffalo, and formed a partnership with the late Judge Samuel Wilkeson, in the forwarding business. The Judge had been amongst the foremost in the controversy between Buffalo and Black Rock, and although many hard things had been said about him in our paper, he remembered with unkindly feelings nothing that occurred in the season of anger and strife. He had a mind of large grasp, quick perception, indomitable energy; never sparing time or money so long as a possibility existed of accomplishing any great object he undertook. He may emphatically be numbered with the leading minds that laid the foundation of this city. The partnership lasted two years. The Judge said to me: "This is a poor business, not furnishing sufficient support for two families; I am not acquainted with the business, and you have been in it all your life; I will retire; you take the warehouse and dock, pay me two hundred and fifty dollars a year rent, and go on for yourself." I told him I would take the warehouse if he would paint it. He did so, and I continued the business alone until the end of the year 1835, at the same rent. While the partnership continued, and afterwards when I was alone, we had the agency of a large line of boats on the canal, and vessels on the lake; yet so scarce was western freight that it was difficult to get a full boat-load, although the

boats were then of light tonnage. A few tons of freight was all that we could furnish each boat to carry to Albany. This they would take in, and fill up at Rochester; which place, situated in the heart of the wheat-growing district of Western New York, furnished nearly all the down freight that passed on the canal. Thus we lived and struggled on until 1830. Our population had increased largely, and numbered that year six thousand and thirty-one.

In the fall of 1831, I received from Cleveland one thousand bushels of wheat, which was sold to Bird & McPherson, and ground into flour at their mill at Black Rock Dam. The next winter I made an arrangement with the late Colonel Ira A. Blossom, the resident agent of the Holland Land Company, to furnish storage for all the wheat the settlers should bring in, towards payment on their land contracts with the Company. The whole amount did not exceed three thousand bushels.

On the second of April, 1821, the present County of Erie was set off from Niagara county. In 1832, the village of Buffalo was incorporated as a city. The same year, the Ohio canal, connecting Lake Erie with the Ohio river, was completed, which gave us a little more business. In 1833, emigrants from the older portions of our country and from Europe began to pour into Illinois, and some into Wisconsin. This gave a large increase in canal and lake business up, but there was little or no increase in down freight. Northern Ohio was then the only portion of the great West that had any surplus agricultural products to send to an eastern market. A large portion of this surplus was sent to Illinois and Wisconsin, and consumed by the large number of emigrants then flowing into those states. The continually-increasing numbers of emigrants required provisions to be imported into, instead of exported from, the far West, for several years. So small was the lake commerce in down freight, that all the flour, wheat and corn received at this port, and shipped on the canal in 1835 for an eastern market, was equivalent to only five hundred and forty-three thousand



eight hundred and fifteen bushels of grain. Since then, there has been received and sent forward, through the same channel and by railroad, more than sixty millions of bushels of grain in a single season.

In 1833, a little stir commenced in land operations, which increased the next year, and in 1835 became a perfect fever, and swallowed up almost everything else. Nearly every person who had any enterprise, got rich from buying and selling land; using little money in these transactions, but paying and receiving in pay, bonds and mortgages to an illimitable amount. The city was now rapidly increasing in numbers and wealth, and no one had the remotest idea that anything could happen to interrupt our constant progress onward to the state of a great city. All great danger was passed. We were now so strong in numbers—our population having increased in 1835 to fifteen thousand six hundred and sixty-one—and had become so wealthy, that any set-back to our progress was an idea that was inconceivable, and considered by many ridiculous. For about half the year 1836, the land fever raged more violently than at any former period, and larger fortunes were made in a single day in paper obligations, than at any time previous.

A single instance will suffice to show how rapidly land was bought and sold at that time. In 1815, I purchased at Black Rock, for two hundred and fifty dollars, two lots—one, two-thirds of an acre, lying between Niagara street and the river; the other, a five-acre lot, about half a mile distant. In the fall of 1835, land in that village rose to very high prices, and I began to think my lots worth three thousand dollars. I left the city early in February, and did not return until the twentieth day of April. The next morning, in walking down Main street, a man met me opposite Townsend Hall, who inquired what I would take for my two lots. I replied, "Six thousand dollars." We parted. Continuing on down street, soon another asked me the same question. I replied in the language of that day, "I can't now give you a price, having just given another a re-

fusal of these lots until twelve o'clock, to-morrow, for seven thousand five hundred dollars. He immediately replied, "I will take them if the other does not." I passed on a little further, when I was hailed by a man on the opposite side of the street, who came running over to me, inquiring, "Will you sell your land, and what are your terms and price?" I replied, "Twenty thousand dollars; ten per cent. down, the balance in four annual payments, with interest." He quickly replied, saying, "Say six annual payments, and I will take it." I assented, walked into an office, received my two thousand dollars, and next day gave a deed and took a bond and mortgage for the balance. Thus in going along the street about fourteen rods, I raised my price fourteen thousand dollars, and then sold.

In 1837, a great mercantile revulsion took place. The banks suspended, individuals failed, securities, supposed to be based on sound bottom, proved worthless; and from a supposed wealthy condition we were dashed suddenly to comparative poverty. Our most industrious, enterprising and useful business citizens found themselves bound down by mountains of obligations, which they had assumed in times of speculation, that no mortal exertions of theirs could clear them from. Those who held these obligations were as badly, if not worse, off than those who owed them. They could realize nothing from them, and the change that suddenly-acquired wealth always brings about in the style and manner of living—creating endless wants and desires that continually grow, as the means of gratifying them are to be found—made it difficult for many to realize and get along under their changed condition. The false pride engendered, and the prospects of their children, no longer expectant heirs of large fortunes, were alike scattered to the winds, and several years of their after-life was spent in grumbling over their losses.

In 1840, our population had increased to eighteen thousand two hundred and thirteen. The products of the West now began to come forward in larger volume, and prices ruled very low;



but the increase of business again revived hopes, and industry and economy were strictly applied.

In 1842, the national bankrupt law came to our relief, and removed an immense weight of worthless obligations, that bore down and crippled the exertions of a large number of useful citizens. No sooner were they set at liberty than they applied their energies with renewed industry to legitimate business; and soon a change for the better was seen and felt again in Buffalo. The city continued to prosper, increasing in numbers; business and real wealth. In 1845, our population had increased to twenty-nine thousand seven hundred and thirty-three; and the receipts of produce from the West that year were equivalent to fifteen million bushels of grain. In 1850, our population had reached in numbers forty-two thousand two hundred and sixty-one. In 1855, after our corporation limits had been enlarged, and the villages of Black Rock and the Plains brought within it, our numbers were increased to seventy-four thousand four hundred and fourteen. In 1860, this had reached eighty-one thousand one hundred and twenty-nine. By the state census of 1865, our population was ascertained to be ninety-four thousand five hundred and two.

I have not deemed it necessary to say much in detail about the city since 1845. That seemed to me the turning-point. From that time we have been steadily and safely moving onward and upward, and there is no apprehension felt or expressed, that we shall ever again be driven and tossed about as we have been, by any fortuitous circumstance that might arise.

Heretofore, we have built our hopes of success and greatness on our commercial advantages, which have done everything for us; and I trust no exertions will be wanting to continue and increase this important branch of business to our city. As our population and solid wealth has increased, labor has become more abundant, and we now have large manufactories of various and profitable kinds which, working together with our

commercial business, furnish employment for a very large number of persons during the whole year.

In tracing, as I have attempted to do, something of the early history of Buffalo, I have shown that our city is not a very ancient one; that in its early beginning, and for many years afterwards, great difficulties and embarrassments had to be met and overcome; and that its present prosperous condition is not alone the work of the early settlers. They laid the foundation; they planted and watered the seeds of our great commerce at an early day, from which we have derived so much benefit; but they have been greatly aided in pushing on this work by those who are annually coming among us. It now remains with those who will soon take our places, to see that Buffalo shall never again retrograde or stand still, for want of energy on their part to keep up her march onward.

I have said much about the early Indian difficulties in Ohio. It may not at first strike you how much Buffalo was interested in them. Without the settlement and prosperity of the West, Buffalo could never grow; and the West this day would present a very different condition of things, if the Grand Erie Canal had never been constructed. Thus we are, and must always continue to be, commercially and financially connected. I trust that no circumstance will arise that shall ever break up or seriously impair the mutual interest and understanding of both sections, that now so happily exist.

With your permission, I will vary the monotony of my extended remarks, by relating an anecdote about the celebrated Red Jacket. All who were acquainted with Red Jacket know that he understood and spoke but few words of English. He had an interpreter, called Major Jack Berry; a stout-built, fat Indian, with long, black hair, which he kept tied, cue-fashion, and which, with his face, was well greased; a perfect shadow of Jacket, and who, following him everywhere, was the medium of communication between Jacket and the white people. On a certain occasion they called at David Rees' blacksmith shop,



which stood on the site of the present Post Office building, and Jacket, through his interpreter, gave Rees very particular instructions how he wished a tomahawk made. Rees said he understood what he wanted, and would make it for him. In due time Jacket and the Major called upon Rees, who presented the instrument he had made. It did not fully meet the wishes of Jacket, and he again, through the Major, more fully explained how he wanted it made. Rees again undertook the job. After a while Jacket called again. Rees presented him his new work, which Jacket found great fault with, telling Rees that, in attempting a second time to execute his order, he had made a worse blunder than at first—that he was a stupid fellow—that he did not understand, nor know how to execute, an order when given to him—that he would not trouble him with another description of what he wanted made, but would bring him a pattern, and he might try to make something like it. Jacket brought the pattern, and Rees took it without saying a word, and promised to have the tomahawk done at a certain time. Jacket called at the time stated, and Rees handed him the pattern and the copy he had made. The instant Jacket took them in his hand, he saw he was *sold*; he had forgotten to make an *eye* in the pattern, and Rees had made an *exact copy*. He threw them down indignantly, and uttering the exclamation, “Ugh!” left the shop without saying another word.

Within the last two months I have made many enquiries, and taken much pains to ascertain as correctly as I possibly could, who are now living that resided in Buffalo or on the immediate frontier, before the war of 1812, and who now reside here. Without doubt, this list is defective; there may be some names left off that should be on it, but they cannot be many. The following is the list which I have made:

Levi Allen,  
Mrs. Orlando Allen,  
Dan Bristol and wife,  
Cyrenius C. Bristol,

Mrs. Elizabeth Jones,  
Mrs. S. Kibbe,  
Jesse Ketchum,  
Mrs. John Lay,

Mrs. Benjamin Bidwell,  
 John Bidwell,  
 Mrs. Mary P. Burt,  
 James L. Barton,  
 Joseph A. Barton,  
 Lester Brace and wife,  
 Mrs. Aurelia Bemis,  
 Robert H. Best,  
 George Cotton,  
 Elizabeth Cotton,  
 Mary Cotton,  
 Lester H. Cotton,  
 Benjamin C. Caryl,  
 Mrs. Sally Davison,  
 Elijah D. Efner,  
 Mrs. Esther P. Fox,  
 Hiram Griffin,  
 Harmon Griffin,  
 Mrs. Abby Heacock,  
 Mrs. Mary Harris,  
 Mrs. William Hodge, Sr.,  
 Mrs. Sabrina Howes,  
 Miss Sarah Hodge,  
 Philander Hodge,  
 Valorus Hodge,  
 Benjamin Hodge,  
 William Hodge, Jr.,  
 Mrs. Sally Judson,

Mrs. Mary Lord,  
 Henry Lovejoy,  
 Frederick Miller,  
 Mrs. Samuel H. Macy,  
 Mrs. Jane McDonald,  
 Mrs. Lydia Pomeroy,  
 Mrs. Doctor Pratt,  
 Alanson Palmer,  
 Samuel Pratt,  
 Lucius H. Pratt,  
 Henry Roop,  
 Mrs. Lewis Stevens,  
 Mrs. Pamela Sidway,  
 Mrs. A. M. C. Smith,  
 Mrs. M. B. Sherwood,  
 Mrs. O. G. Steele,  
 James Sloan,  
 Lucius Storrs and wife,  
 Le Grand St. John,  
 Thomas J. Smith,  
 Luman Smith,  
 Harry Thompson,  
 Mrs. Louisa M. Weed,  
 Mrs. Doctor Warner,  
 Mrs. E. Walden,  
 William Wells,  
 Mrs. Foster Young,  
 William F. Young.

Here is a little company of sixty-seven persons, all that are left of the earliest settlers of Buffalo. They are living witnesses of the waste that time makes with the human family. They yet linger amongst us, but are almost lost sight of among the tens of thousands who now throng our busy streets. Many of these persons are very aged, and it cannot be expected they will remain much longer. All of them are well advanced in life. Soon they will all disappear, and you will behold them no more. It is to be hoped, when the departure of the last surviving one takes place, it will be with more happy reflections than befell the lot of the noble Indian who, after his family had been butchered by Colonel Cresop, and the friends and companions of his early days had all gone to the "happy hunting-



ground," in contemplating his desolate and broken-hearted condition, exclaimed with his dying breath,—“WHO IS LEFT TO MOURN FOR LOGAN?”

THE TRIAL AND EXECUTION  
OF  
THE THREE THAYERS.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, MARCH 15, 1869.

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BY NATHANIEL WILGUS.\*

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I FIRST saw two of these young men, Isaac and Nelson, in September, 1824. They came into the village of Buffalo with a load of lumber, drawn by an ox team. I was standing with the late Hiram Pratt, at the corner of Main and Swan streets, and they came along with their team, bound for their home in Boston, in this county. They prided themselves on their notoriety. Each one had on an old-fashioned bonnet, in place of a hat or cap; and they were distinguished by many other peculiarities that made them the subject of remark by our citizens. They were very profane, and called one of their oxen "God Almighty" and the other "Jesus Christ;" and at the time I saw them were evidently much intoxicated. I then observed to Mr. Pratt that human life would not be of much value in their hands.

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\* Died, March 28th, 1873.



I next saw them after their arrest for the murder of John Love. Isaac, the youngest, was first arrested upon suspicion, brought to Buffalo and confined in the jail; and after a few days' search the body of Love was found, and then Israel and Nelson were arrested and also brought to the jail.

Wray S. Littlefield was the Sheriff, and when he came into Buffalo with them he drove to R. Hargrave Lee's store on Main street, where Julius Francis now keeps a drug store, and sent for General Potter, the then District Attorney. From thence they were conveyed to the old stone jail erected in 1810, on Washington street, where the Darrow block now stands. The jail was a two-story stone building, with a high basement; and a flight of steps ascended from the sidewalk to the door.

The yard around the jail was surrounded with wooden spiles or pickets from fourteen to sixteen feet high, after the fashion of old forts in the early days of our country.

Isaac was at the time confined in the debtors' apartment, as there had been no particular proof against him, and he insisted that Love had not been murdered, but had left the country for fear of being arrested on account of debt. When his two brothers had been brought into the room where he was, and General Potter informed him that the dead body had been found, shot through, he turned pale and lifeless, and made no reply, but covered his head with his bed blanket. They were then placed in separate cells to await the action of the grand jury, and a true bill was found, and they were tried on the twenty-first, twenty-second and twenty-third days of April, 1825, in the old court-house in Buffalo, before Hon. Reuben H. Walworth, then Circuit Judge, and afterwards Chancellor of the State. General Potter conducted the trial as District Attorney, and Thomas C. Love with other counsel defended. The proceedings of the trial were fully reported by James Sheldon; and a copy can be seen at the Young Men's Association rooms. Judge Walworth sentenced them to be hung, June 17th, 1825.

During the time of their confinement, I resided on the east side of Washington street in the building now occupied by a bonnet factory, and next door below Doctor Blanchard's; which residence I commenced occupying in 1819, about fifty years ago; and I had almost daily intercourse with the unfortunate young men. Isaac was but twenty-one years of age, Israel twenty-three, and Nelson twenty-five. The Sheriff had also directed me to furnish a guard of four men from my military company, to guard the jail during the time. Walter W. Porter, now of Buffalo, was one of the guard. The prisoners were always cheerful, and seldom alluded to their awful situation, but continued their jokes and free and easy conversation to the day of execution.

The extraordinary circumstances attending the murder, and the fact that the prisoners were young men and brothers, and were to be executed on one scaffold, excited public attention and drew together an immense concourse of people from Western New York and Canada.

On the morning of the seventeenth day of June, 1825, the military paraded under the directions of the Sheriff, in order that the law should not be defeated of its victims.

General Potter had command of his regiment of militia to which my company was attached, and that of Captain Alanson Palmer; my company having the right of the regiment. Captain S. Mathews and Captain Nathaniel Vosburgh, each commanded a troop of horse. Captain Crary was in command of a company of artillery, and Captain Rathbun of a rifle company.

The troops formed on Washington street, opposite the jail, in a hollow square; and as the jail door opened Sheriff Littlefield came first, bearing the sword of justice; then came the prisoners, Isaac first, attended by Sheriffs; officers and all marched down the steps into the hollow square, and thus were protected from the surge and sway of the immense and excited multitude.

They were dressed in the usual manner of malefactors to be executed, with white caps and shrouds. The procession



was then formed, the guard surrounding the prisoners. A cart immediately preceded them, carrying the three coffins destined soon to receive their lifeless bodies.

They appeared sedate and calm, and seemed to have summoned all their fortitude to support them on this occasion. As the band of music commenced playing a slow and plaintive air, the prisoners took the step upon the ground, and marched off with firm and regular tread. On their right and left were ranged the military, infantry and cavalry, marching each in single file, the whole surrounded by a countless throng of silent spectators. In this manner the procession moved on up Washington street and across the park, then open ground, and down Court street to the place of execution; forming one of the most solemn processions perhaps ever witnessed.

The scaffold was erected in Court street about one hundred and fifty feet east of Morgan street, and near the residence of the late Judge Wilkeson; but at that time there were no houses in the vicinity, and the land lay open to common use.

The brothers marched up into the scaffold with a firm tread; and when all were seated and order prevailed in the multitude, the Rev. Mr. Fillmore made a short address and offered a prayer, and was followed in prayer by the Rev. Mr. Story.

The prisoners then arose, and after shaking hands with friends, exchanging adieux with each other, and the officers of the law and ministers of religion, the halters were adjusted, their arms pinioned, they took their places on the fatal drop, when, at fifteen minutes before two o'clock, the Sheriff, with his sword, cut the rope, and they were launched into eternity.

They died without a struggle, and after hanging half an hour their bodies were lowered into their coffins and given to their friends, who removed them to the town of Boston for interment.

Thus ended this exciting public execution, attended by a multitude estimated at from twenty-five to thirty thousand people.

The father of the condemned men was under arrest at the time for the same crime, and witnessed the execution from the steps of the old court-house.





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# THE VILLAGE OF BUFFALO DURING THE WAR OF 1812.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, MARCH 13, 1863.

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BY WILLIAM DORSHEIMER.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

In attempting to furnish my contribution to the purposes this society has in view, I thought I could do the most acceptable service by making a connected narrative of the events which took place in this locality during the late war with Great Britain. But I have found that such a narrative, in complete detail, will extend far beyond the limits which are prescribed to a public address. I have, therefore, been obliged to limit myself to the more important of those events; and I ask your attention this evening chiefly to a description of the various encounters with the enemy, which occurred within the present corporate boundaries of Buffalo; and also of the siege of Fort Erie, and the memorable sortie by which the siege was raised.

On Friday, June 26th, 1812, a messenger, probably sent by the British representative at Washington, arrived in Lewiston carrying to the Canadian government information that the United States had declared war against Great Britain. Hos-



tilities commenced with singular promptitude. On the following day, June 27th, at one o'clock in the afternoon, the schooner *Connecticut*, Captain Johnson, owned by Mr. Peter H. Colt, of Black Rock, lay off the mouth of Buffalo creek, waiting for a favorable wind. At this time two row-boats, containing an armed force of forty men, put out from Fort Erie, and rapidly approached the vessel. Captain Johnson immediately weighed anchor, and endeavored to reach Sturgeon Point. The breeze was light and against him. The boats soon overtook him, and the *Connecticut* became a British prize, the first one taken upon Lake Erie. Many inhabitants of the village saw this occurrence, and, although General Porter arrived from the east the same day, to most of them it was the first information they had that war had been declared.

In 1812, Buffalo contained about a hundred houses and five hundred inhabitants. The buildings were scattered along what is now Main street, from Goodell street to the site of the Mansion House. A few tenements stood upon the side streets. On what we call the Terrace was a low bluff, between which and the creek stretched a morass, covered with bushes and rank grass, exposing to view the lake and river. From all other sides the forest crowded close upon the little hamlet.

The long threatened war had excited grave apprehension lest the neighboring Indians should side with the English. Mr. Erastus Granger, the government agent, hastened to ascertain their purposes. A Council was held June 29th with the principal men of the Six Nations, and in a printed circular issued immediately, Mr. Granger announced that there was no cause for apprehending any danger from the Indians.

Warlike preparations were immediately made. Major Frederick Miller was appointed commandant of the forces at Black Rock, and Colonel Swift at Lewiston. An express was despatched to Canandaigua for arms and ammunition. Some companies of militia were ordered *en masse* to Black Rock, and the light infantry company of Captain Wells and the militia

company of Captain Hull were embodied to protect Buffalo.

The English threw up batteries at Waterloo, and the Americans constructed some earthworks at Black Rock. I have endeavored to ascertain the location and armament of the batteries which were built by our forces during the war, and I will here state all that I have been able to learn about them; without reference, however, to the time when they were built. On the south side of Conjaquadies creek, and near its mouth, was the sailors' battery, in which were mounted three long 32-pounders. On the site of Mr. Wm. A. Bird's house, and occupying that and the adjoining lot, was a battery defended by three guns. On the ground now occupied by the stables of the Niagara Street Railroad Company was Fort Tompkins, the largest of the fortifications. Its armament consisted of six or seven pieces of different calibre. In the rear of the fort, and extending across the road, was a range of sheds, used as barracks. Further south (not far from the water-works), and at the bottom of a ravine which may still be seen, was a mortar battery, armed with one 8-inch mortar, popularly called the "Old Sow." On the northerly corner of the Fort Porter grounds stood a light earthwork, in which was one 24-pounder gun. On the Terrace, in the village, near the present Western hotel, was a breastwork, sometimes called a battery. I cannot learn that it was ever armed. It may have been temporarily armed, but, if so, only with field-pieces. These works were intended to cover the river and the opposite shore. Except the sailors' battery, none of them offered any obstacle to a force advancing on the village from the north.

Brigadier-General William Wadsworth was the first general officer in command of this frontier, but was soon succeeded by Brigadier-General Hull, who arrived July 24th, escorted by a body guard consisting of a detachment of fifteen of the East Bloomfield Light Horse, commanded by Sergeant Boughton. This officer gave way to Major-General Stephen Van Rensselaer, who arrived on the tenth of August, and assumed command.



During the first months of the war there was little to mark its progress. The files of the *Buffalo Gazette* furnish but meager items. We are told that the troops are under admirable discipline; that they are in good health; that the cooking excites much complaint; that occasionally persons straggling into Canada are captured, and suspicious persons are arrested here as spies. Early in August a rumor ran through the camps that the enemy had occupied Grand Island. The island belonged to the Six Nations, and the Senecas at once assembled for the purpose of consulting Mr. Granger upon the subject. It seems to me that the speech of Red Jacket on this occasion is remarkably suggestive of Indian experience. The chief said: "Brother, you have told us that we had nothing to do with the war that has taken place between you and the British; but we find that the war has come to our doors. Our property is taken possession of by the British and their Indian friends. It is necessary for us to take up the business, defend our property and drive the enemy from it. If we sit still upon our seats, and take no measure of redress, the British (according to the custom of you white people) will hold it by conquest; and should you conquer the Canadas you will claim it upon the same principles, as conquered from the British. We, therefore, request permission to go with our warriors, drive off those bad people, and take possession of our land." The rumor proved to be false, and the Seneca warriors were reserved for other fields.

August 13th the first shot was fired from the river batteries. The gun was discharged, without orders, by a party of soldiers. The ball struck a few feet from an earthwork on the other side, but did no execution.

Not until the ninth of October, was any considerable enterprise against the foe attempted. For some time before, the brig *Adams*, of six guns, taken by the English at Detroit, and the schooner *Caledonia*, of two guns, belonging to the Northwestern Company, had lain at anchor near Fort Erie. Farmer's Brother,

the famous Seneca chief, first suggested to Lieutenant Elliott, of the navy, that these vessels might be cut out. Acting on this suggestion, Elliott prepared an expedition for the purpose. At one o'clock in the morning of Friday, October 9th, he set out with three boats; one commanded by himself, containing fifty men; the second, commanded by Lieutenant Watts, sailing-master, containing fifty men; and the third, under the charge of Captain Cyrenius Chapin, with a crew of six men. Captain Sloan,\* still living at Black Rock, piloted the flotilla. Elliott silently approached the enemy's vessels, and at three o'clock both were boarded simultaneously; the crews being surprised, and surrendering after a short resistance. In the space of ten minutes the prisoners were secured, and the captured vessels under weigh. The wind was not strong enough to enable them to make head against the current, and Elliott, in the *Adams*, followed by the *Caledonia*, was obliged to run down the river, under a heavy fire from the enemy. The *Caledonia* was beached at Black Rock. The *Adams* anchored about four hundred yards from one of the British batteries; upon which, as long as her ammunition lasted, she maintained a rapid and effective fire. Efforts were vainly made to work the vessel over to our shore; and as the guns of the enemy threatened to sink her, Elliott cut her cable and made sail; but was soon brought up upon Squaw Island, where he abandoned her. A party of the enemy took possession, but were soon driven off, with heavy loss, by the American artillery, under Lieutenant-Colonel Winfield Scott. During the entire day the poor ship was battered by the guns of both sides; and was so injured that she could not be floated. A few nights after, Captain Chapin brought off a long 12-pounder from the *Adams*, and the next day Lieutenant Watts brought off another. These guns were placed in our earthworks, and were the heaviest-mounted up to that time. We captured fifty-eight men, including three commissioned of-

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\* Died March 5th, 1868.



ficers; and recaptured twenty-seven American prisoners, who were confined on board the vessels.

Our loss was, one killed and four wounded. The residents of Buffalo, who took part in the affair, were Captain Chapin, John McComb, John Tower, Thomas Davis, Peter Overstocks and James Sloan, who are complimented for "their soldier and sailor-like conduct." The *Caledonia* belonged to the Northwestern Company, and was loaded with furs. She afterwards was one of Perry's fleet, and took part in his memorable engagement. This bold enterprise did not long pass unnoticed. On the thirteenth, the British batteries opened a heavy fire upon Black Rock, which was continued with vigor through the day. Our guns were so light that but little return was made. A barrel of old Pittsburg whisky in the barracks, behind Fort Tompkins, was blown up. Several houses were struck, and one man, a negro, who belonged to the marines, was killed.

The unfortunate engagement at Queenstown, which occurred the same day as the bombardment, caused the withdrawal of General Van Rensselaer from the command on this frontier. He was succeeded by General Alexander Smyth, of Virginia, who at once issued an earnest proclamation, in which he stigmatized his predecessor, in the spirit which we have seen in our own days, as a "popular man, destitute alike of theory and experience in the art of war," and promised that in a few days the troops under his command would plant the stars and stripes in Canada. Earnest preparations were made for the invasion, and the forces at Buffalo, already large, were increased.

Over three thousand five hundred men were now collected here, and boats enough to pass thirty-five hundred over the river at once. On the twenty-seventh of November, the troops were ordered to embark the following morning at the navy-yard, near the mouth of the Conjaquadies creek. At three in the morning two preparatory expeditions started. One, under Captain King, with Lieutenant Angus, of the navy, and a body of sailors, were ordered to take and render useless the batteries

opposite Black Rock; and a second detachment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Boerstler, was to capture a guard, and destroy the bridge over Frenchman's creek. The whole movement was under the command of Colonel Winder.

Boerstler succeeded in landing some of his men near Frenchman's creek, and routed the British guard; but upon approaching the bridge, was informed by a prisoner that Ormsby was in full march to resist him, and retired without accomplishing his purpose, or attempting to co-operate with the other detachment.

Of King's ten boats, but four reached their destination. In these were the seamen and about seventy infantry. The sailors rushed forward with their pikes and cutlasses, stormed the Red House, and threw two pieces of artillery into the river. King, with the infantry, marched upon the two exterior batteries, carried the first, and found the second deserted. He spiked the cannon, and destroyed the carriages in both. He then returned to the shore, but found that the boats were gone. Angus, with his sailors, had come back from their victory, and not seeing their companions, supposed they had embarked, and went off, taking away all the boats. King, however, succeeded in finding two of the enemy's boats, in which he embarked his prisoners, and as many of his soldiers as they would carry. He, with the rest of his command, were taken prisoners. The return of Angus and Boerstler, without knowing what had befallen their comrades, induced Colonel Winder to go in search of them. But he found the English in force, and returned, after suffering considerable loss.

Notwithstanding these mischances, the expedition had been substantially successful. All of the enemy's heavy guns had been spiked, and Smyth might fairly anticipate a safe landing. He was in bed when the firing began, and after breakfasting leisurely, he repaired to the navy-yard. A part of the regulars were in the boats, and the rest of the army under arms. By two o'clock, half the force was embarked, and boats for a thousand more were at hand. The day wore on, but the order to ad-



vance was not given. The men began to murmur. Finally, late in the afternoon, after having sent to the British commander a request to surrender, Smyth ordered the men to disembark.

The next morning another proclamation, more terrible than any of its predecessors, was issued. Among other things, the general said to his men: "To-morrow, at eight o'clock, all the corps will be at the navy-yard, ready to embark. The general will be on board. Neither rain, snow nor frost will prevent the embarkation. The music will play martial airs. Yankee Doodle will be the signal to get under way. The landing will be made in spite of cannon. Hearts of war! to-morrow will be memorable in the annals of the United States." But the delay had given the enemy opportunity to reoccupy their batteries and remount their guns. A direct attack had become hazardous. Porter remonstrated against it; and at his suggestion, the expedition was postponed another day, and it was resolved to cross by night, and land five miles below Waterloo. Again the willing soldiers filled the boats; the martial airs were played; everything was in readiness, but the familiar strain of Yankee Doodle was not heard. Hours passed, and at daybreak it was announced that the expedition was abandoned. Indescribable confusion followed. The men were beside themselves with rage. They broke ranks, discharged their muskets in the air, and some of them threw away their arms and went home. Thus closed the campaign of 1812 on this frontier. Were it not for our later experience, we would think it impossible for greater disgrace and humiliation to befall a nation.

In the year 1813 this locality was not made the base of any important military operation. July 11th of this year the British made their first attempt to capture the village of Buffalo and Black Rock. On Sunday morning, just before daylight, Colonels Bishop and Warren, with about two hundred and fifty men, crossed the Niagara below Squaw Island. They marched to Conjaquadies creek, and occupied the navy-yard before they

were discovered. The militia detachments at Black Rock were surprised, and retreated up the beach. The enemy took possession of the village, fired the sailors' barracks and block-house at the navy-yard, and also the barracks at Fort Tompkins. They dismounted and spiked three 12-pounders, and took away three field-pieces and one 12-pounder. They also captured a large amount of whisky and other stores. General Porter then lived on the site now occupied by the house of the Rev. Mr. Robie, the chaplain of the twenty-first regiment. His house-keeper saw the enemy coming up the road, and warned the general, who had barely time to run to the barn and throw himself upon his horse. He spurred into the woods, went across to what is now North street, and so to Buffalo.

Major Adams was in command at Black Rock, and at once sent an express to Buffalo for reinforcements. A small force was soon gathered consisting of one hundred-regulars, under Captain Cummings; the same number of militia, under Major Adams; thirty volunteers from the Plains, under Captain Hull; a company from Buffalo, commanded by Captain Bull, and thirty Indians, under the leadership of the redoubtable Farmer's Brother. The militia, Major Adams, formed the left; the regulars and Buffalo company the center, and the men from the Plains with the Indians were posted on the right. The enemy were found in line of battle near Fort Tompkins, the present site of the street railroad stables. The left, led by General Porter, began the attack; vigorously supported by the Indians on the right, who were posted in the forest. After a contest of fifteen or twenty minutes, the English began to give ground, when the American center was ordered to move. Thereupon the enemy retreated in disorder to the river, near the present ferry, and took to their boats. A heavy fire was kept up on them from the shore, and the hindmost boat suffered very severely. Colonel Bishop, who commanded the expedition, was mortally wounded; and Captain Saunders, of the forty-ninth, was also wounded. He was taken to General Porter's



house. The English lost about one hundred killed, wounded and missing; eight killed and five wounded left on the field; besides those who may have been wounded in the boats, and also fifteen prisoners. Our loss was three killed and five wounded; among the wounded was the well-known Seneca Indian Young King, who, with the more famous Farmer's Brother, was conspicuous for valor in the skirmish.

Henry Lovejoy, then a boy of twelve, took part in this affair; carrying, as well as his strength would permit, a huge flint-lock musket.

A few months after this little victory, the great disaster of the war came upon Buffalo; a disaster which was inflicted, not without excuse, by way of retribution for the wanton destruction of Newark\* by General McClure.

On the nineteenth of December, 1813, an English force, under Colonel Murray, surprised and captured Fort Niagara. The villages from Fort Niagara to the Falls were soon after burned. The disposable American forces were hastily concentrated at Buffalo, under command of Brigadier-General Amos Hall. They were composed as follows: One hundred and twenty-nine mounted men, Lieutenant-Colonel Boughton; four hundred and thirty-three Ontario exempt and volunteers, Lieutenant-Colonel Blakeslie; one hundred and thirty-six Buffalo militia, Lieutenant-Colonel Chapin; ninety-seven Canadian volunteers, Lieutenant-Colonel Mallory; three hundred and thirty-two Genesee militia, Major Adams. These were stationed at Buffalo. At Black Rock were three hundred and eighty-two militia, under Brigadier-General Hopkins; thirty-nine mounted infantry, Captain Ransom; eighty-three Indians, Lieutenant-Colonel Granger; one field-gun and twenty-five men, commanded by Lieutenant Seely. On the twenty-ninth of December, a regiment of Chautauqua county militia, three hundred strong, under Lieutenant-Colonel McMahan, arrived in Buffalo,

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\* Now Niagara village.

swelling the whole force to two thousand and eleven men: but the troops were raw, undisciplined, poorly armed, and without a sufficient supply of ammunition.

On the evening of the twenty-ninth, the British left, consisting of eight hundred regulars and militia and two hundred Indians, landed below Conjaquadies creek, and took possession of the sailors' battery. General Hall ordered the troops at the Rock to dislodge them. The first fire threw our militia into disorder, and the attack failed. Major Adams and Colonel Chapin were then ordered forward to carry the battery; but, after a short skirmish, their men fled, and were not again embodied. The Ontario command under Colonel Blakeslie were then sent up. But, before the attack had begun, the day broke and revealed the English center crossing to our shore, in the rear of General Porter's house; and about the same time their right landed in small force, near Fort Tompkins. The invaders were commanded by Lieutenant-General Drummond, but were under the immediate direction of Major-General Riall.

This disposition of the foe compelled General Hall to change his plan. The order to Colonel Blakeslie was countermanded, and he was directed to attack the English center at the water's edge. The enemy's left wing was soon discovered moving from Conjaquadies creek upon our right; the Indians under Colonel Granger, and the Canadian volunteers under Colonel Mallory, were advanced to meet them, and Colonel McMahon's regiment was held in reserve. Lieutenant Seely opened the engagement with his 6-pounder, and a 20-pounder and two twelves at the battery were soon brought into service. At the same time the batteries on the other side of the river threw a heavy fire of shell, round and hot shot. Colonel Blakeslie held his force in line, and as the enemy landed, poured upon them a most destructive fire. On our right, however, but a feeble resistance was offered. All the corps had been gradually reduced by desertion, which began with the first shot, in the night. Perceiving the danger to his right,



General Hall ordered up the reserve under Colonel McMahon, to hold the enemy in check. But this corps disgracefully scattered before it came under fire. The whole right wing of the American force was now driven from the field, and the steadfast militia of Colonel Blakeslie were exposed to a cross-fire. For half an hour, outflanked and outnumbered, the gallant little regiment maintained the unequal contest; but at last, to avoid capture, it was ordered to retire. By this time the greater part of the Americans were flying in all directions, most of them going through the forest to reach the Buffalo and Batavia road. A small number of the bolder spirits, among whom were Colonel Chapin, retired slowly along Niagara street, towards Buffalo. Among these was Lieutenant John Seely, a carpenter and joiner, who lived on the corner of Auburn and Niagara streets, and was lieutenant of a company of artillery at Black Rock. He had fought his piece on the brow of the hill, on what is now Breckinridge street, until he had but seven men and one horse left. Mounting the horse, which was harnessed to the gun, he brought it away with him, firing upon the enemy whenever occasion offered. Near where Mohawk street joins Niagara, was then a slough. Here Seely turned upon his foe. The gun was thrown off from its carriage by the discharge, but was quickly replaced, and taken to the village.

Meanwhile a sailor named Johnson, E. D. Efner and a few others, went to a vessel, one of Perry's fleet, which lay beached on this side of the creek, near its mouth, and took off an iron 9-pounder, mounted upon a ship's truck, which they placed in Main street, opposite Church, and trained down Niagara street. Besides Johnson and Efner, the following persons assisted in serving this gun: Robert Kane, a mason by trade; Captain Hull, father of Mrs. O. G. Steele, and Absalom Hull, his brother. At the third round, one of the truck wheels broke; but they were loading it again, when Colonel Chapin, who thought resistance hopeless, and wished to give the people time

for escape, rushed forward with a handkerchief, or as it is said, with a piece of his shirt, upon the end of his sword, and shouted, "Don't fire that gun." "I will fire it," said Kane. "I'll cleave to the earth the first man who touches it. I've shown a flag of truce;" replied Chapin, and started forward towards the enemy, who were by this time in the woods, upon what is now called Franklin Square. A parley took place, which resulted in Colonel Chapin surrendering the town, stipulating for the protection of private property; a stipulation by which General Riall refused to be bound, when he learned that Chapin was not in command, and was, therefore, without authority to treat with him.

It was now ten o'clock. The day was bright, but cold. A heavy snow had fallen early in December, which still lingered in the woods, but the roads were bare. Most of the able-bodied men were with the troops. Through the long, dreary December night, the lonely women had heard the rattle of musketry, and at daybreak they gathered in groups, listening with throbbing hearts to the cannonading at the Rock. Presently, tidings of defeat flew through the town; and soon upon every road, leading towards the Indian settlement, were little processions of terrified villagers, fleeing from the savage foe, into the embrace of the wintry forest. Who shall tell what they suffered—those houseless fugitives, ignorant of the fate of father, husband, brother; by day, skulking through the forest, and at night, creeping under the friendly roof of some Indian hut!

The British Indians had left the main column before it reached the village; and, swarming through the woods, came into Main street, near Tupper. A house, which stood on the northwest corner of Tupper and Delaware streets, was the first burned. A man, named Dill, lived there. Judge Tupper's house, on Main street, near the corner of Tupper, was the next. Opposite, above the residence of Mr. Andrew Rich, lived Samuel Helms; he was slain while attempting to escape, and his house burned. Going down the street, the torch was applied



to every building they found. Mrs. Lovejoy was in her house, on the present site of the Phoenix. The night before, her husband had mounted his horse, and taking his trusty rifle, had gone to the Rock, to make such defence of his home as became a brave man. "Henry," said the bold-hearted woman to her little son; "you have fought against the British; you must run. They will take you prisoner. I am a woman; they will not harm me." The lad flew into the woods. His light footfalls have not faded from the mother's ear when a score of Indians, wild with whisky and the rage of battle, rush into the dwelling and commence to sack it. Confident in the great defence of her sacred sex, the careful housewife attempts to save her hard-earned treasures. Poor woman, thy sex is not sacred here! A tomahawk crushes into her brain, and she falls dead upon the floor of her desecrated home. On the other side of the road stands the house of sturdy Mrs. St. John, able to defend her castle against a legion of enemies, whether savage or civilized. What magic she used, or by dint of what prowess, we know not, but the storm of fire passes scathless over her roof. Two-thirds of the village is now in flames. The English, with their cruel allies, weary with the long march and continued fighting, retire to the Rock.

In the night there is a fall of snow, and by daylight some of the fugitives return, preferring their savage foe to the inhospitable forest. Mrs. St. John receives some of them, and gives them a cup of tea. A few have gathered at Dr. Chapin's house, which is still standing, when the alarm is suddenly sounded, and once more the merciless invaders burst upon the remnant of the devoted village. The work of destruction is soon completed, and many of the returned villagers are captured. But four houses remain—that of Mrs. St. John; the jail; the frame of a barn, which stood where stands Mr. Callender's house, and Rees' blacksmith shop. The day before, Judge Walden went to Lovejoy's, and placed the murdered woman, attired, as she fell, in her black silk dress, on the bare cords of the bedstead.

Its ghastly occupant does not save the building; it, too, is fired, and becomes the funeral pyre of its unhappy mistress.

The American general reported his loss—and, I suppose, his statement is confined to the army—at thirty killed, forty wounded, and sixty-nine taken prisoners. Among the slain were Major William C. Dudley, Adjutant Tatman and Lieutenant-Colonel Boughton, who, I think, is the Sergeant Boughton who, the year before, escorted General Hall into the village, at the head of a detachment of the East Bloomfield Horse.

The Buffalonians slain are these: Job Hoysington,\* a carpenter and joiner, who lived on Church street, near Franklin; John Triskett, who cannot be identified; John Roop, father of Henry Roop, a teamster, of Dutch descent, but American birth, who lived on Main street, above Tupper—he was shot while trying to escape; Samuel Helms, already mentioned—he was a German and an old bachelor, and deserves to be remembered by the epicures of Buffalo, as the first market gardener in the place. He raised the first lettuce, which he used to carry in a basket on his head, selling it from door to door. He it was, too, who dug the ditches to drain the morass south of the Terrace. N. D. Keep was killed by a British officer near Cold Spring. James Nesbit and ——— Myers I can find no trace of. The last was Robert Franklin, an aged negro, very black, who lived in a log hut on Niagara, opposite Jersey street. Whether the old negro died defending his home, I know not. His lifeless body was found near his house, and long remained unburied.

The following residents of the village were captured: Cyrenius Chapin, John Lay, Charles C. Wells, William Wilber, Rufus Botsford, Joseph D. Hoyt, Robert Keene, Timothy Strong, Benjamin Hodge, Jr., Daniel Baxter, and Captain R. Harmon.

The new year dawned upon homes desolated by fire, and upon scattered families; but the unflammable Buffalonians

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\* For account of Hoysington's death, see *Buffalo Cemeteries*, p. 53.



soon gave signs of life in the neighboring villages. The *Gazette* is printed in Williamsville, where it remains until April 4th, 1815. Seth Grosvenor and Eli Hart open their stores, and Walden and Potter their law offices, in Williamsville. The embers of Pomeroy's house are not yet cold when he announces that his Eagle hotel is to rise, Phoenix-like, from its ashes. On April 5th, the *Gazette* announces that "Buffalo village, which once adorned the shores of Erie, and was prostrated by the enemy, is now rising again."

In the spring, new men were at the head of our forces. Scott, Ripley and Porter held brigadiers' commissions; and Jacob Brown, fresh from the plow, was charged with the command of the Niagara frontier. Brown had little education, and still less military training. But he possessed in an extraordinary degree those qualities, which, in all ages, have been found more essential to a captain than all the learning of Brienne or West Point—a temper which was never so calm as when excitement raged all around him; perfect courage; complete confidence in himself; and, above all, the knowledge that a campaign cannot be reduced to a certainty like a siege, and the disposition to take the risks which are involved in all field operations. Buffalo at once became the center of important movements. A larger force than had ever been here was soon concentrated: two brigades of regulars, under Scott and Ripley; and a brigade of volunteers, with a few Indians, under Porter.

On the morning of July 3d, the regulars were thrown across the Niagara. One brigade, under Scott, landed about a mile below Fort Erie; and Ripley, with the second brigade, landed about the same distance above. The fort was soon surrounded, and surrendered with the loss upon our side of but four men wounded. On the fifth of July occurred the battle of Chippewa; and on the twenty-fifth of the same month, the desperate engagement of Lundy's Lane. The American army was greatly reduced by these battles. Brown and Scott were wounded;

and Ripley, who succeeded to the command, retired to Fort Erie, where he arrived on the twenty-seventh of July.

Fort Erie was a small work with two demi-bastions; one upon the north and the other upon the south front. It was built of stone, but was not of sufficient strength to resist ordnance heavier than the field artillery of that day. Ripley at once commenced to strengthen the position. Fortunately, General Drummond delayed his advance for two days, giving the Americans an opportunity of which they industriously availed themselves. Two bastions were added to the west face of the fort; an earthwork was thrown up upon its northerly side, extending to the river, and defended on the westerly end by a battery of two guns, known as Douglass' battery. From the southerly face of the fort a line of earthworks and abattis was drawn parallel with the beach for about seven hundred yards, to the point where the shore of the lake curves into the bank of the river. At the extreme left of this line, upon Snake Hill, was a redoubt, defended by five guns, under Major Towson. Between Snake Hill and the main work defending the line of earthworks, were two batteries; one of three guns, under Captain Biddle, and the other of two guns, under Lieutenant Fontaine. By these additions, Fort Erie was changed into an entrenched camp, with its rear open toward the river.

General Drummond appeared before the fort, on the third of August, with a force of five thousand three hundred and fifty men. He established his camp two miles distant, back of Waterloo, and commenced a double line of entrenchments within four hundred yards of the main work. The same morning he threw a force of about one thousand men across the river, and landed them below Squaw Island, with the intention of seizing Buffalo, destroying the stores gathered there, and interrupting the communications of the American army. This soldierly plan was happily frustrated by Major Morgan with a battalion of the First Rifles, two hundred and fifty strong. Morgan had observed the enemy moving up the river the



morning before, and, suspecting an attack, he threw up a breastwork of logs on the north side of Conjaquadies creek, and tore up the flooring of the bridge which then crossed the stream a little below the site of the present bridge. The bridge stood on two bents, and the platform which crossed the channel was movable, and was raised when vessels went through to the navy-yard. The flooring was torn up between the southern shore and the first bent, so that those approaching from the north could not see that the bridge was impassable, until they were half way across.

At four o'clock in the morning the British advanced at a double-quick, and dashed on to the bridge. The head of the column recoiled when half way over the bridge, but its impetus was so great that many of the men were thrown into the water. The attacking party soon scattered under the deadly fire which Morgan's men poured in from behind the log breastwork. The British commander then sent forward a party to repair the bridge, under cover of the fire of his infantry, who were formed in the skirt of a wood. But they were unable to work before the muzzles of those sure-sighted riflemen. They accordingly fell back, and for a time the fight was kept up at long shot. Being strongly reinforced from the Canadian shore, Colonel Tucker sent a flanking force to cross the creek higher up; this was encountered by a detachment of sixty men from Morgan's battalion, and repulsed with severe loss. The enemy then retreated, carrying off their killed and wounded. Their loss is said to have exceeded fifty, while we lost but two killed and eight wounded. But for Morgan's stubborn and gallant defence, the American army at Fort Erie must have been compelled to surrender. Drummond was greatly disappointed at the failure of this expedition, and issued a general order, in which he indignantly denounced the conduct of his own men as unmilitary and disgraceful.

During the following fortnight several skirmishes occurred in front of Fort Erie, in one of which the gallant Colonel Morgan was killed.

General Drummond, having been still further reinforced, determined not to wait for the slow results of a siege, but to carry the place by assault. . At two o'clock in the morning of the third of August, the British army moved to the attack in three columns. One was ordered to carry the Douglass battery, upon the extreme right of our position; another column was to engage the fort itself; but the main attack was directed against the Towson battery upon Snake Hill. Brigadier-General Gaines, who had lately arrived, was now in command of the American forces, which were disposed as follows: Captain Towson, with six guns, held the redoubt on the left; Fort Erie was defended by Captain Williams with the 19th Infantry, under Major Trimble; the batteries on the front were commanded by Captains Biddle and Fanning; and that on the extreme right by Captain Douglass. The old brigade of General Scott, now under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Aspinwall, was posted on the right; General Porter, with his volunteers and riflemen, held the center; and General Ripley, with two regiments of regulars, the left. The evening before, a shell had exploded a small magazine in Fort Erie; and General Gaines was apprehensive that the enemy would take advantage of this disaster and attack him,—one-third of the troops were therefore kept at their post through the night, which was dark and rainy. His precautions were well taken. At half-past two the tramp of a heavy column was heard approaching Towson's redoubt. Instantly a sheet of fire flashed from our lines, lighting up the night, and revealing the enemy fifteen hundred strong. They had been ordered to attack with the bayonet; and to insure obedience, the flints had been removed from their muskets. With complete courage they approached to within reach of the light abattis, between Snake Hill and the lake. But after a desperate struggle they fell back. Again they advanced, and this time succeeded in planting scaling ladders in the ditch in front of the redoubt. But their ladders were too short, and the assailants were driven off with severe loss. Meanwhile a de-



tachment endeavored to turn our position by wading out into the river, and passing round our left. Ripley met them promptly. Numbers were killed or wounded, and were carried off by the current, and the remainder of the detachment were captured. Five times the obstinate English returned to the assault, but each time without success. Colonel Flascher, their commander; now concluded that his task could not be accomplished, and ordered a retreat. The Americans at once made a sally and captured one hundred and forty-seven prisoners.

The other British columns waited until the engagement on the left was at its height. On our right the enemy advanced to within fifty yards of the Douglass battery, but were then driven back. At the fort the contest was more severe. The assailants, led by Colonel Drummond, an officer of singular determination, advanced through a ravine north of the fort, and attacking simultaneously all the salient points, they swarmed over the parapet into the north bastion. Some British officer instantly called out to our forces along the line extending to the river, to cease firing. This ruse succeeded, and our fire ceased. Taking advantage of this, the enemy again attacked the Douglass battery, but were driven back before their scaling ladders could be planted. While this was going on, the garrison of the fort rallied, and after a severe contest succeeded in regaining possession of the bastion. A second and third time Drummond returned to the assault with no better success. But with invincible tenacity he clung to his purpose. Moving his troops, under cover of the night and the dense cloud of battle which hung along the ramparts, silently round the ditch, he suddenly repeated the charge. The English ran up their ladders so quickly that they gained the top of the glacis before the defenders could rally to resist them.

Drummond was in the lead, and as he stepped from the ladder, "Charge," he shouted, "give the Yankees no quarter." His followers rushed upon our artillery men and infantry: a deadly combat ensued. Williams and Macdonough soon fell,

mortally wounded, and the bastion was lost. Macdonough asked for quarter; but Drummond, whose brutality stood in striking contrast with his splendid valor, refused it. Macdonough then seized a hand-spike and defended himself against several assailants, until Drummond shot him down with his own pistol. The next instant the British commander was shot through the heart, by an American soldier who stood near Macdonough.

The garrison of the fort made repeated unsuccessful efforts to retake the bastion; but at day-break it was still in the enemy's possession. Powerful detachments were then brought up from the left and center, and a combined attempt was made from several different directions to drive the British from their position; but, after a desperate struggle, this likewise failed. The guns of the Douglass battery, and those under Captain Fanning, were turned upon the bastion, and Captain Biddle was placing a piece of artillery to enfilade it, while several hundred of the American reserve stood ready to rush upon it. At this moment a loud explosion shook the earth, and the whole bastion leaped into the air, carrying with it both its assailants and defenders. The cause of this explosion has never been accurately ascertained. It is generally supposed to have been accidental. But the romance which never fails to cluster around such scenes, attributes it to the dying Macdonough; who, wishing to avenge his own murder, threw a lighted match into an ammunition chest which stood near him.

The shattered columns of the foe now retired to their encampment. The British report stated their loss at nine hundred and five killed, wounded and missing; of whom two hundred and twenty-two were killed, including fourteen officers; one hundred and seventy-four wounded; and one hundred and eighty-six prisoners remained in our hands. Our loss, including eleven prisoners, was eighty-four men. In the bombardment of the day before we had forty-five killed and wounded; swelling our total loss to one hundred and twenty-nine.



A few days after this, Drummond was reinforced by two regiments, and reopened fire along his own line. The bombardment continued through the remainder of the month of August. On the twenty-eighth, General Gaines was wounded by a shell, which fell into his quarters, and General Ripley again assumed the command, but was soon superseded by General Brown, who had recovered from the wound received at Lundy's Lane.

General Porter, by dint of superhuman efforts, gathered a considerable body of militia at Buffalo, to reinforce the fort. Early in September, he ordered them to cross the river. The line was formed along Pearl street, in the rear of the First Church. As soon as the head of the column began to move, and its direction became apparent, an officer—one of those men who, in such times, are scrupulous as to the law in proportion to the value they set upon their lives—stepped out of the ranks, and shouted out: "We are militia of New York, and cannot be ordered out of the state. It is unconstitutional." It was wonderful, how suddenly a love for the Constitution developed itself in the breasts of the militia men. Large numbers left the ranks and began to clamor against the order. But Porter and a few determined officers spurred among the malcontents, arrested the ringleader, awed his followers, and, aided by a small detachment of regulars, restored order. This constitutionalist—who, I need hardly say, was a lawyer—was hurried into a quartermaster's cart, and sent under a strong guard to Williams-ville; with the information, that if he returned with his legal scruples into our lines, he would be shot forthwith.

Notwithstanding the victory I have just described, and the reinforcements brought by Porter, the American army at Fort Erie was in a very dangerous situation. Their foe was daily increasing in number, and three new batteries were thrown up, whose fire was rapidly making the position untenable. The river lay in their rear, and there were not sufficient boats at hand to carry the army to our shore. Successful and imme-

mediate action was imperative. Under the pressure of this great necessity, General Porter planned a sortie, which was submitted to General Brown; who approved it, and ordered it to be carried out. The plan was to throw two strong columns upon the enemy's batteries—which were about two miles distant from their camp, and separated from it by a dense forest,—destroy the cannon, and roughly handle the brigade which might be on duty in the entrenchments. Under cover of a fog, a road was cut through the wood, on the sixteenth of September. This road started from Towson's battery, and making a wide detour, was carried off in a northwesterly direction, to the rear of the enemy's line. The working party, under command of Lieutenants Biddle and Frazier, in doing the work, reached to within pistol-shot of the British right wing without being discovered.

General Porter was ordered to move up this road with a column of sixteen hundred men, made up of volunteers, militia and regulars. General Miller was directed to concentrate his brigade in a ravine which ran between the fort and British lines, by passing it by detachments through the skirts of the wood. General Ripley, with the 21st Regulars, was held in reserve, and lay out of view, between the two new bastions of the fort. On the morning of the seventeenth, a severe gale set in, which increased through the day. At twelve o'clock, Porter formed his men in three divisions, and set out from Towson's battery. As he began the march, a violent thunder storm, with heavy rain, began; which made it impossible to see the distance of a dozen yards. Shrouded in the tempest, Porter crept silently up to within a few rods of the enemy's right flank; who, unsuspecting of attack at such an unseasonable time, had made no preparations for defence.

At twenty minutes past three o'clock, Brown found Porter in position, ordered him to attack, and hurried down into the ravine, where Miller lay hid. Porter found but little opposition, and carried a block-house in the rear of Battery No. 3, and took possession of the battery itself. As soon as he heard



the firing, Miller advanced, formed a junction with Porter, and the combined columns stormed Battery No. 2. But thirty minutes had passed since the battle commenced, and the enemy's line of entrenchments, two of their most formidable batteries, and two block-houses were in our hands. By this time, the English had recovered from their surprise; their reinforcements had been brought up, and they were prepared to make a stubborn defence of Battery No. 1, which stood behind Battery No. 2, and near the river bank. Breastworks connected the first and second batteries, lines of entrenchments intersected each other for a hundred yards in the rear, and several rows of abattis added to the difficulty of the approach. Brown sent forward his reserves to strengthen Miller's column. Under the lead of this gallant officer, so distinguished at Lundy's Lane, the Americans, cheering loudly, charged over the entrenchments, through the abattis, winning their way with the bayonet, and drove the enemy from their last battery. Ripley, who was now in the front, formed his force in line north of the besiegers' work, to protect the detachments who were detailed to spike the enemy's guns and destroy their entrenchments. This, the object of the sortie, being accomplished, the Americans retired to their fort.

By this enterprise, altogether the most brilliant military event which occurred on this frontier during the war, all of the enemy's guns in position were made useless, and their entrenchments destroyed. We took three hundred and eighty-five prisoners, including eleven commissioned officers, and killed or wounded six hundred men. Our own loss was five hundred and ten.

In his despatch, General Porter speaks of Captain Elliott and twenty young gentlemen, who volunteered from Batavia, and were under his command. I have been unable to ascertain the names of any of these, except that of James Stevens. He also mentions fourteen volunteers, who were exempt by age from military service, as being distinguished in the action. The only

citizen of Buffalo whom I can ascertain to have been present as a volunteer, was the well-known Thomas C. Love, who was wounded in the hand.

While the fight was in progress, the people on this side came to the river bank to watch the fray. Even in Buffalo, a more terrible storm has seldom been known. The flame of battle could be but dimly discerned through the blinding rain, and the cannon were voiceless amidst the roar of the tempest and the surf. All through the afternoon, no tidings came. Just at dusk, a small boat was seen struggling in the rapids. An eager crowd soon gathered on the beach. In the midst of the breakers, the little bark upset. One of its crew was seen floating on the waves. The by-standers made a line, by holding on to each others' clothes, and stretching out from the shore, seized the drowning man. As, exhausted and chilled, he staggered up the beach, he gasped into the ears of his rescuers the first news they had of the great conflict and victory.

Four days after this, General Drummond raised the siege, and fell back to Fort George.





# AN ANCIENT WRECK AND STOCKADE.

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TWO PAPERS READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, MARCH 4, 1867.

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BY E. H. STEWART AND O. H. MARSHALL.

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[MR. STEWART'S PAPER.]

KNOWING that your Society appreciates even the smallest scrap of the early history of this county, and that every man should investigate at least the history of the lot on which he lives, I send you my researches on Lot 50, T. 9, R. 8, Holland Land Company's Purchase. On part of this lot, north of Eighteen-Mile creek, Ebenezer Ingersoll settled with his family in 1811. The first business of the new settler was to clear away the forest; and, in cutting down a large black oak, he found a spot near the heart where it had been cut with an axe, apparently more than a century before. One hundred grains were counted outside the old cut.

Near this tree, and to the north, he came upon an old stockade on the bank of Lake Erie, with its opening toward the lake. At first he regarded it merely as a ridge in the land; but, on examining, found that this ridge ran around in a semi-circular form, one-half to three-fourths of an acre; and in this ridge were still to be found the bottoms of the palings. He traced these palings, set close together, around the entire ridge,



to the top of the high bank of the lake. In front of this stockade under the bank, toward the lake, was about one acre and a half of land, covered with timber; on which, after being cleared, they raised crops; but which has since been washed away, and is now mostly covered with water. He found inside these palings various articles: what they called a Spanish dirk-knife, nine inches long, with brass handle; a bayonet; a long, narrow, iron axe; iron cask hoops; a small kettle and other articles. Some new discoveries were made at every plowing. Inside the palings and on the ridge, trees—mostly maple and beech—stood, from eight to twenty-four inches in diameter.

Some twenty or thirty rods to the west of this paling, on land first purchased by Abraham Brinkerhof, and on the top of the bank, were found about half a bushel of iron spikes eight or nine inches long, such as are used on vessels. This excited curiosity; and, on looking about, near a tree covered with moss, they found a large iron ring, or, as they called it, a withe for a mast; having a joint on one side, and locking on the other, with a slot for a key to draw it together; and on the other side was an eye to receive a hook or staple. This ring weighed seventy-five pounds. A large quantity of iron was found; consisting of smaller rings, large iron links or loops, short flat bars of iron, &c. The iron found was abundant for their blacksmithing purposes for many years. Colonel A. J. Myer is now the owner of the land on which were found the stockade and these relics.

At the mouth of the Eighteen-Mile creek about one hundred rods from this stockade, in the sand on the beach, two small cannon were found in 1815. They were about 3-pounders. Some accounts make them brass, some iron guns; at all events, there is no doubt but that two guns were found there. The late R. S. Ingersoll informed me that there was a litigation between two men named Ward and Walker, about the possession of these guns. One of them was used at a Fourth of July celebration at Abbott's Corners in this county; but what has be-

come of them I cannot learn. An account of these cannon by Mr. Peters, of Evans, will be found in the History of the Holland Land Company.

A small anchor was found, also, near where these cannon were. These facts were obtained from R. S., G. S. and John Ingersoll, sons of Ebenezer Ingersoll, above mentioned.

These relics point to the wreck of one of the early trading vessels, at the mouth of this creek. Some have conjectured it to be the *Griffin*, but it is more likely to have been the *Beaver*.

What this stockade could have been built for, or by whom, it is difficult to conjecture. It is hardly probable that the crew of the wrecked vessel would have built a stockade so near the place where the vessel must have stranded.

This paper, however, was not written to establish any theory, but to give facts; and now, having given the facts, I leave the learned members of your Society to speculate upon them.

[MR. MARSHALL'S PAPER.]

THERE have been many speculations in regard to the vessel, the remains of which are the subject of Mr. Stewart's communication. An examination of the manuscripts of Sir William Johnson has satisfied me that the vessel was an English transport,—wrecked on the eighth day of August, 1763, on her voyage from Fort Schlosser to Detroit.

After wresting from the French the fortresses of Niagara and Quebec, in 1759, the English found it essential for the protection and advancement of their interests on the great Western lakes, to construct suitable vessels for the transportation of troops and supplies.

It appears from the journal of Sir William Johnson, kept in 1761, that during that year a schooner was built on Navy



Island, in the Niagara river. Sir William states that he left it on the stocks on the twenty-sixth day of August, on his way to Detroit; and on his return—five weeks later—found it anchored in the rapids, about a mile from Lake Erie, where “the current was running six knots an hour.”

It appears from the same journal, under date of October 5th, that a sloop was building on Navy Island the same year, but would not be finished until next spring. It may be mentioned in this connection, that to this day, the Senecas, in allusion to the building of the above vessels, call Navy Island, “The Big Canoe Island.”

Pontiac had held Detroit under his remarkable siege during the spring and summer of 1763. The garrison had suffered much from want of supplies; and the sloop, having been finished in 1762, was despatched the following summer from Fort Schlosser with the much-needed succor. A storm overtook her on this errand of mercy, and she was driven ashore at the mouth of Eighteen-Mile creek, on the eighth day of August, 1763. De Couagne, the Indian interpreter, announced its loss in a letter to Sir William Johnson, which, unfortunately, has not been preserved. In a subsequent one, written from Niagara on the eighth of the following September, he says:

“In my last I wrote you that the sloop was lost upon Lake Erie. Since they have been on shore they have been attacked by a few straggling Indians, and have lost three men in the breastworks, and one that was scalped. Daniel and the rest of the Indians behaved very well.”

A more particular account of the wreck is contained in a letter from Colin Andrews to Sir William Johnson, dated at “Cat Fish Creek, fourteen miles in Lake Erie, Sept. 9th, 1763,” and which reads as follows:

“According to Daniel Oughnour’s desire, I now take the freedom to write to you. The 8th ultimo, we have been cast away at this place, which detained him from proceeding to Detroit; but he says he will go forward, and deliver your belts, and bring you an answer from the different nations, according to your directions. The 3d instant we had three men killed by a

small party of Indians. Daniel spoke to them a little distance from the breastwork, but they would not tell what nation they were. He says he believes they are Senecas (Cinices.) We expect the schooner from Detroit daily. Aaron and five Indians went in her to Detroit. Daniel gives his compliments to you and family, and desires the favor of you, in case you see his wife, to tell her he is well." [Signed,]

"COLIN ANDREWS."

It will be noticed that the letter bears date at "*Cat Fish Creek, fourteen miles in Lake Erie.*" No stream answers to this distance but Eighteen-Mile creek. The discovery of the remains of a vessel and "breastwork" near its mouth, as related by Mr. Stewart, seems to lead irresistibly to the conclusion that they all have reference to the wreck of 1763.

Major Wilkins wrote from Niagara on the thirtieth day of August, 1763, to Major Alexander Duncan, then in command of Fort Ontario (now Oswego), that "the sloop was run ashore about twenty miles from the mouth of Lake Erie; going with provisions to Detroit."

"This," Major Duncan remarks, in a letter to Sir William Johnson, "is a very unlucky accident, as there is no other vessel but a small schooner, which carried about two hundred barrels to supply Detroit with provisions."

In a letter from Captain Gavin Cochrane to Sir William Johnson, dated at Fort Johnson, November 5th, 1763, he says:

"Captain Daniel, at parting, pressed me much to give an account of his behavior while with me, when I was guarding the wreck. I was there about a fortnight, and in all that time he was but once drunk. Always at my elbow, and very industrious to do everything to ingratiate himself with me; and so was Jacob, who was with me. We were fired at for near two hours by 25 or 30 Indians, as we guessed from the tracks afterwards; and Daniel kept close by me and showed great zeal. We lost three men. The enemy came very near, but we could not get one shot at them."

The writer of this letter was a captain in the Royal Americans; became a colonel in the British army in 1782, and died in 1786.

Sir William Johnson, in a letter to Sir Jeffrey Amherst, dated September 14th, 1763, alludes to the loss of this vessel as



“very unlucky at this juncture;” and expresses apprehension  
“lest the Indians should burn the other when the frost set in.”

The name of the wrecked sloop was the *Beaver*; that of its  
consort the *Gladwin*. The latter was also subsequently lost  
on Lake Erie with all her crew, through the obstinacy of her  
commander in not providing sufficient ballast.

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MAJOR NORRIS' JOURNAL  
OF  
SULLIVAN'S EXPEDITION.

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JUNE TO OCTOBER, 1779.

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FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT IN POSSESSION OF THE SOCIETY.

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1779

June 18 Friday Morning June 18. 1779. The N Jersey and N Hampshire Brigades with Procters Reg<sup>t</sup> of Artillery, under the command of Major General Sullivan, began to march from Easton on an Expedition to the Western frontiers against the Savages. About 12 o'clock the Troops halted for the day, at Hilliers Tavern 12 Miles from Easton—

19 Marched at 4 o'clock this Morning. & advanced as far as Brinkers Mills 7 Miles, where the Army halted to draw provisions & Refresh themselves, we came through a narrow pass of the blue mountain, calld the Wind-gap, a

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NOTE.—The present being the centennial year of General Sullivan's expedition against the Seneca Indians and Tories in Western New York, it is fitting that the Buffalo Historical Society should at this time furnish its contribution to the original documentary history of that event. This is done by publishing the interesting Journal of Major James Norris, an officer in the expedition, from the original manuscript, in the possession of the Society, the gift of Hon Joseph Williamson of Belfast, Maine.

This Journal is but one of a number—perhaps twenty—which have been found in different places; while others are coming to light here and there.

It is not a complete narrative of the expedition, although it covers the whole period, day



passage apparently designed by Nature for a Communication; and according to the description given by Cornelius Nepos. pretty much resembles the Straits of Thermopylæ where 300 Greeks under Leonidas checked the progress of 800,000 Persians commanded by Xerxes—After having taken rest and refreshment, the Troops marchd 9 Miles farther to Learns's Tavern near Pogono point and encampd, at this place a rattle snake was killd having 7 Rattles on his tail, and a full grown bird in his Stomach, which would seem to confirm the Notion of Snakes having the power of facinating or charming their prey—The Land thro this days march is mountainous, rocky, barren, & uninhabitable; but well waterd and the Streams abounding with Trouts—

- 20 Marched at 8 o'clock & entered an extensive Forrest, calld the great Swamp into which we advanced 5 Miles, & encampd on a small brook; the Gen<sup>l</sup> gave this the name of Chowder Camp—The House we left this morning is the last of the Inhabitants 'till we reach Wyoming.
- 21 This days march of 21 Miles was as Severe as it was unnecessary, through a Wilderness, where there had been only an Indian path, till the Troops cut a road this spring for the passage of Sullivans Army—the fatigues of this Day might have been prevented by a longer march Yesterday: but after crossing two Considerable Streams calld the Tobehanah & Tanckhannanck, there is no proper ground for an Encampment till we get through the Swamp After we had crossd the Creek, we come to the Lehi, the

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by day, from June 18th to October 25th, 1779; and it is in some parts only an account of the proceedings of certain detachments of the army; yet readers of the general histories of the campaign will find it of unquestionable value in corroborating and supplementing these.

It has not been thought best to annotate the Journal, or to accompany it with a general sketch of the expedition from combined sources; though it would have been useful and interesting to do so. The endeavor has been to reproduce the manuscript with scrupulous exactness, so that so far as could be done with types, it might be accurately presented.

A "plan" or drawing of the "order of battle," which was furnished to accompany the general orders for the expedition (a copy of which orders is appended to the Journal), is referred to on page 251, but is not found with the document.—ED.

Western branch of the Delaware, & having passed this we enter a gloomy grove of Cypress, Hemlock, Pine, Spruce &c call'd the Shades of Death. the growth of Timber in this swamp is amazing—

- 22 We moved but 5 Miles to a desolate Farm, the property of one Bullock, who had been driven of with his Familey by the Savages—here we found large meadows & plenty of grass for our horses—
- 23 Our next place of halting is Wyoming, distant 7 Miles, about 4 Miles from this Town we saw two Monuments set up by the way side in memory of Cap<sup>t</sup>. Davis & Lieu<sup>t</sup> Jones of 11<sup>th</sup>. Pensylvania Reg<sup>t</sup>. with the following Incriptions. “The place where Cap<sup>t</sup>. Davis was murderd by the Savages April 23<sup>d</sup> 1779 & “The blood of L<sup>t</sup> Jones—About 12 o’Clock we enterd the Town of Wyoming, which exhibits a melancholy scene of desolation, in ruin’d Houses, wasted fields & Fatherless Children & Widows. These unhappy people after living in continual alarms, & disputing for many Years their possessions with the Pennsylvanians, at length were attacked by a merciless band of savages, led on by a more savage Tory, the Unnatural monster Butler: their Houses were plunderd and burnt, their cattle and effects conveyd away after they had capitulated; and the poor helpless Women and Children obliged to Sculk in the Mountains and perish—or travel down to the Inhabitants, hungry, naked & unsupported. in a word Language is to weak to paint, & Humanity unable to bear the history of their Sufferings—The Refugees who joind the Indians to cut off this settlement, are said to have given proofs of more wanton and unnatural Barbarity than even the Savages themselves—The following is a deeper Tragedy than has been acted since the Days of Cain. A Young man by the Name of Henry Pensil, who had escaped the fate of most of his Countrymen, & in the Evening after the Battle had taken refuge on a small



Island in the River, was discovered by a Tory who fiercely accosted him with the Appellation of a Damnd Rebel: the poor fellow being unarmed began to implore his pity, fell down upon his knees and entreated him not to stain his hands with his Brothers blood, "John, I am your brother, spare my Life and I will serve you:" I know you are my Brother replied the Villain; but you are a damnd Rebel, Henry, and we are of opposite sides and Sentiments—in the mean time was loading his gun with great coolness. which after the most moving appeal to his humanity & Justice, with all deliberation he levelled at his breast and shot him! then Tomahawked, & scalpd him! another young man who lay concealed in the bushes a little way off, & afterwards made his Escape, heard all that passed, and saw the Murderer, who stood up upon a log while he loaded his Gun, and knew him to be the Brother of his unfortunate companion: He also adds that the Savages came up soon after he had finishd the bloody deed: and cursed his cruelty in the bitterness of their hearts & said they had a great mind to put him to death the same way—

24 This Evening one of the Centries fired upon a Savage, who had crept up within 2 or 3 Rods of him in order to take him by Surprise but the fellow made his escape—

25 & 26 Nothing happened worthy Notice—

27 The 2<sup>d</sup> & 3<sup>d</sup> N Hampshire Reg<sup>ts</sup> were orderd to move off their ground and pitch upon the plains of Abraham, 3 Miles higher up on the Western bank of the Susquehanna, in order to be more convenient to Cilleys and Courtlandts Reg<sup>ts</sup>. who composed part of Poors Brigade; and had been lying some time on Jacobs plains—The place of our Camp near an old Stockade fort, built by the Inhabitants and call'd Forty Fort from 40 Persons to whom the grant of the Wyoming lands was made by the Government of Connecticut—

28 Gen<sup>l</sup> Sullivan recd a Letter from Gen<sup>l</sup> Clinton, dated Schoharra, advising that he was furnishd with 3 Months Provisions, 1700 effective men with him present, & 300 more at another post ready to join him, & was waiting his Commands.—Same Letter adds that he had taken & hanged a British Officer, a Spy, who was going from Butlers Army to N York—by the Same Express we learn from Gen<sup>l</sup> Clinton that the Oneida tribe of Indians had recd a Letter from Gen<sup>l</sup> Haldiman, Governor of Quebec, charging them with a breach of faith, & breathing out threatenings against them, if they did not declare in favor of Britain—

30<sup>th</sup> Cilleys & Courtlandts Reg<sup>ts</sup> were musterd—

July 1<sup>st</sup>. Michael Rosebury & Lawrence Miller, inhabitants of Sussex county of N Jersey being convictd by court Martial, held at East Town 3<sup>d</sup> June Gen<sup>l</sup> Maxwell president, for enticeing Soldiers of the American Army to desert, & sentenced to suffer death, were brought on with the Provost & this day led forth to the place of Execution where the former was hanged and the latter reprieved—

2<sup>d</sup> Rode out this Morning with Gen<sup>l</sup> Poor & Lieu<sup>t</sup> Col Dearborn about 4 Miles from Camp to view the ground where the battle was fought between the Savages and the people of Wyoming under Col Butler, we saw a Stockade fort with a covert Way to a fountain which our guide told us was built for a shew by some of the disaffected Inhabitants & given up to the Enemy immediately upon their Approach, we examined the Trees where the line of Battle was formd; but found very few marks of an Obstinate Engagement: it appears indeed that the Enemy were superior in numbers to the Militia and soon after the Commencement of the Action turned their left flank, this brought on a retreat, in which the Savages massacred upwards of 200 Men—We saw more or less of bones scattered over the ground for near two miles, & several Skulls brought in at different times, that had been Scalpd and



inhumanly mangled with the Hatchet—A Cap<sup>ts</sup> Commis-  
sion with seventeen Continental Dollars was found in the  
pocket of the Skeleton of a man, who had laid above  
ground 12 months—Our guide shewed us where 73 Bodies  
had been buried in one hole this place may with propriety  
be called Golgotha All the Houses along this River have  
been burnt; and the Gardens and Fields the most fertile  
I ever beheld, grown over with weeds and Bushes, exhibit  
a melancholy picture of savage rage and Desolation.

3<sup>d</sup>. Anniversary of the battle & Destruction of the Settlement  
of Wyoming—

4 . Anniversary of American Independence declared by Con-  
gress July 4 1776 at Philadelphia: this Day being Sunday  
the Celebration was deffered till next day, when Brigad<sup>r</sup>  
Gen<sup>l</sup> Poor gave an Entertainment to the Officers of his  
Brigade 87 of whom were present—

After Dinner the following 13 Patriotic Toasts were drank—

1. July 4<sup>th</sup>. 1776 The memorable Ærra of American In-  
dependence

2 United States

3 The grand Council of America

4 Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington and the Army

5 Gen<sup>l</sup> Lincoln & the Southern Army

6 Gen<sup>l</sup> Sullivan & Western Expedition

7 King & Queen of France

8 May the Counsellors of America be wise and her Sol-  
diers invincible

9 A Successful & decisive Campaign

10 Civilization or death to all American Savages

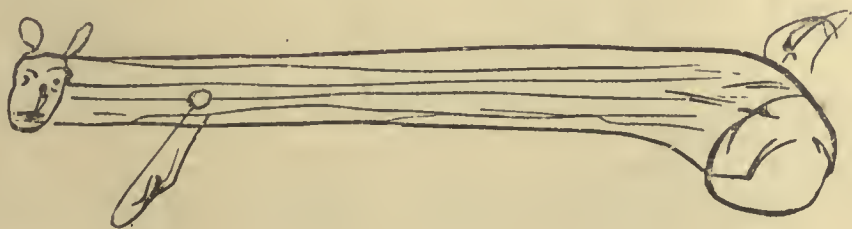
11 The Immortal memory of those Heroes that have  
fallen in defence of American Liberty

12 May the new World be the last Asylum for Freedom  
and the Arts

13 May the husbandmans Cottage be blest with peace  
and his fields with plenty—

The whole of the Entertainment seemed to be conducted with such joy and festivity, as demonstrated an independent elevation of Spirit on this important and interesting Occasion—

- 5<sup>th</sup>. Advices from Juniatta, the West branch of the Susquehanna, that a party of Indians had set upon and Scalpd 9 of the Inhabitants—
- 6 Early this morning one Winslow, a Soldier belonging to the 3<sup>d</sup> N Hamp Reg<sup>t</sup>. went to bathe and was drown'd— About 8 o'Clock an uncommon black & heavy cloud arose in the East with uncommon distinct claps of Thunder like the report of a Cannon followed by a Severe Shower of rain & hail some of the hailstones were as large as hens eggs—
7. 8. 9. No News—
- 10 A Detachment of 150 Men from 1 & 2<sup>d</sup> N Hampshire Regim<sup>ts</sup> was sent towards Easton to Escort some Stores and Repair the roads
- 11 Our Officers recd their commissions from Congress on the new Arrangement—
- 12 Three Companies of the German Reg<sup>t</sup>. deserted
- 13 We recd a Visit from Col Butler and his Lady & ½ doz Young Ladys from Wyoming with whom we pass an agreeable afternoon: Col Butler shewd us a death Mall, or war Mallet that the Indians left by a Man they had knocked on the head: the handle resembles that of a hatchet, with a string drawn thro near the end to hold it by—It is made of the Root of a Tree with a large ball worked on the head of it, & looks not much unlike a four pound Shott in the Bill of an Eagle, with a tuft of feathers on the Crown: the end of the handle shows the face of a Wild-Cat—





- 15 We learn from the Eastward that the main body of the British Army have retired from Kings ferry on Hudsons River, leaving 6 Reg<sup>ts</sup> to keep that post—
- 16 Rode out with Gen<sup>ls</sup> Sullivan Maxwell & Poor & several other Gentlemen to View the ground where the two Butlers fought
- 17 By advices from Connecticut, the Enemy have made an incursion into that State, and burned Fairfield and plundered New Haven—
- 18 Nothing remarkable
- 19 \_\_\_\_\_
- 20 \_\_\_\_\_
- 21 We recd a Letter from Major Gibbs of his Excellencys Guard advising that in the night of the 15 Inst. B. Gen<sup>l</sup>. Wayne with the Light Infantry had Supprized and taken the Fort at Stoney point near Kings ferry on Hudson's River, by which important Enterprize upwards of 500 British & new Levies with all their Cannon, War like Stores and Baggage fell into our hands—
- 22<sup>d</sup> \_\_\_\_\_
- 23 Made an Excursion to Lachawanunch about 8 Miles on a party of pleasure with Lieut Col Dearborn, Capt. Fogg & Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Evans, staid out all night and returned next day—a Guard of 20 men from Poors Brigade was sent up to this place to protect some of the Inhabitants till they mowed their grass and reaped their grain that grew spontaneously from last years crop ungathered—wherever we rode the same sad Scene of Ruin and desolation appeared—
- 24 Gen<sup>l</sup> Hand arrived at Wyoming from Sunbury with 70 boats laden with provissions for our Expedition—
- 25 Five Soldiers belonging to the German Reg<sup>t</sup> were sentenced by Court Martial to be shot for desertion—
- 26 The five deserters sentenced to suffer death Yesterday were reprieved
- 27 Gen<sup>l</sup> Poors Brigade marchd from Forty fort to Wyoming

in order to be convenient to fall in with the line of march—

28 Nothing remarkable—

29 Recd Orders to march towards Tioga—next day Gen<sup>l</sup> Sullivan recd a Letter from Northumberland—

30 Copy of the Letter

The Enemy yesterday made themselves masters of Freeland's fort on the West branch of Susquehanna upon terms of Capitulation Viz. The men to remain prisoners of War; the whole Garrison to be plundered by the Indians; the Women to go free—the number of the Enemy appearing before the fort about 250, one third British, the residue were Savages, together with a Corps de Reserve of 100 More at some distance; the whole under the command of Capt McDonald, we have now at Northumberland about 150 to oppose the Enemy & protect the Women & Children, whom it is impossible to get off—We expect to be attacked every hour as we are the most frontier garrison & fear without some speedy Assistance, must fall a prey to Savage Tyrants—The Enemy have collected all the Cattle & every thing Valuable as they came on—We beg leave to give it as our opinion that a party of men thrown across the Country will retake the plunder and every thing else

Wm. Cooke D Q M. G—

N. B. The number killed in Action were Capt. Hawkins Boon & 40 men, after the Capitulation, who were on a Scout and had not heard of the Surrender of the Garrison—

The Acc<sup>ts</sup> we recd from the Delaware at Minisings on the 29<sup>th</sup> are more favorable than at first Represented—The Tories & Savages made a descent upon that Settlement & having burned several Houses, Barns & C. were attacked by a Reg<sup>t</sup>. of Militia who repulsed & pursued them a considerable distance—Forty men were killed on our side the Col<sup>o</sup> & Major included—The Enemy's loss unknown We hear Gen<sup>l</sup> Clinton with the main Body of the British Army is moving up Hudson's river—

The Army Under Gen<sup>l</sup> Sullivan recd orders to march tomorrow Morning—

31 After a great deal of trouble in fitting and loading the boats & in fixing the Pack Horses for the march, we moved from Wyoming at 1 o'clock, in the following order—



Gen<sup>l</sup> Hands' Brigade a mile in front to act as light Troops—Gen<sup>l</sup> Maxwells & Poors, then the Pack Horses about 1200 in Number, followed by about 500 head of Cattle—One Reg<sup>t</sup> for rear Guard—200 men as a flank Guard on the Right & 60 men on our left by the River—

Col. Procters Reg<sup>t</sup> of Artillery go by Water with about 120 Boats with provisions and Stores—a Cap<sup>t</sup> & 60 men march on the opposite side of the River to Scour the Shore & prevent Ambuscades being formd—we marchd about 10 Miles and encampd near a Stream calld Lachawanunck which falls into the Susquehanna at this place—The land here is level and exceeding fertile, but now desolated and the houses burnt by the Savages; the Inhabitants having shared the fate of their Neighbors at Wyoming—

We have had a remarkably wet Season for a Fortnight past which still continues—

August 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday.

We lay still this morning waiting for fair Weather & the Arrival of our boats—Afternoon 4 oClock we Struck Tents (the Weather being favorable & boats arriving) & marchd to Quilutimack 7 Miles the difficulty of the Way along the foot of the Mountain that juttet down upon the River, gave inconceivable Embarrassments to the Troops as well as to the pack horses & Cattle, so that the former did not arrive at the place of Encampment before 9 oClock nor the latter with the Rear guard till next Morning—About 3 Miles from Quilutimack is a romantic fall of Water down a Precipice in the Cliff of a Rock 70 feet high—In this Days march we passd over a large tract of good land—

2<sup>d</sup> The Army lay Still on this ground to rest and recruit the pack horses & collect the Keggs of flowr, Ammunition and other baggage that was left behind from the perplexity of the Way and darkness of the Night—The morning shewd us that the ground we encampd on had been inhabited and tilled, tho now over run with Grass and Thistles of a

mighty growth—a wild enormous mountain lay close on our front & the River in our Rear—We drew the Seine at this place and caught a number of fish consisting chiefly of Rock, Pike, 1 Garr, Chubbs & Suckers—next Morning at 7 oClock—

- 3<sup>d</sup> We proceeded 12 Miles farther, over a much better Country than we expected and encampd in an old Field, near the Mouth of a Small river that falls here into the Susquehanna calld *Tunkhannuck*—Nothing remarkable happened thro this days march—the Deer seemd to be plenty on this ground—a large Fawn that lay Sulking in the Bushes alarmd with the noise of the Troops attempted to make his escape, but being entirely surrounded was taken without a wound—Affording great amusement to the Soldiers & and an agreeable Viand to several of the Officers—
- 4 The General beat and we struck Tents at 6 oClock this Morning and marchd 13 Miles by Actual Survey—we passd several places that were once the habitations of retirement and domestic peace—but now the Solitary haunts of Savages. the *last* stood near a small rapid river calld Meshopping; we encamped 2 or 3 miles beyond this Stream on a desolate Farm, the property of one *Vandelip* who had joind the Savages and gone off—This day several large Rattle Snakes were killd—our little Fleet found great difficulty & Embarassment from the Shoals & Rapids, so that they did not come up with the Army till 10 the next day—Immediately upon their Arrival the Troops were put in motion—The land we passd over this day is fine to admiration & the growth of Walnut the Stateliest I ever saw—
- 5 Our next place of Encampment is Wyalusing, distant 10 miles the Ground rocky and Mountainous, particularly one tremendous ridge, over which our right Flank was Obliged to pass, that seemd to over look the World & threaten Annihilation to our prostrate Troops—After leaving this place the Scene opened into a fine, clear, extensive peice



of Wood land; here the Gen<sup>l</sup> apprehending an attack the Signal was beaten for the Army to close Column this order of march was observed till we left this forrest and gained the Summit of a verry lofty Mountain; when another Signal was given for marching in files—From the Top of this height we had a grand prospective view of our little Fleet coming up the River at about 3 Miles distance—The green hills as far as the eye could reach rising like the seats of an Amphitheatre and the distance of the prospect gave the River and boats the beautiful Resemblance of Miniature painting—After marching abt. 2 Miles we descended into the low grounds of Wyalusing where every one was amazed at the luxuriant growth of Timber chiefly Sycamore—few of the Trees being less then 6 feet in Diametre and to close this days march the more agreeably after passing half a mile of a piny barren, the plains of Wyalusing opened to our sight coverd with english grass, the greenest and Richest carpet that Nature ever Spread—There was once an Indian Town at this place consisting of about 80 houses, or hutts built in two parallel right lines forming a Street of 60 or 70 feet wide; with a church or Chapel in the Centre the plan of the Town is still to be seen from the old Ruins that Remain on the ground—The Natives it seems had actually embraced the Christian Religion which was taught them by a Moravian Missionary from Bethlehem for that purpose in the Year 1770 the Connecticut Company having purchased the lands on this River, the Indians retired farther Westward, and left this place in the possession of a few Americans, who have joined the Enemy since the commencement of this War—notwithstanding the Settlement has been over run by the Savages and the Town burnt—The Susquehanna at this place makes nearly a right Angle, and forms a point on which the Town stood, and where Gen<sup>l</sup> Sullivans Army lay two Days encamped—

- 8<sup>th</sup>. Sunday Morning 7 o'clock moved on towards Tioga, and Encamped on a peice of low ground by the River, where there has been a Settlement & 4 families dwelt in the Year 1775—this place is call'd *Standing Stone Bottom*—Capt Spalding who commands the Independent company in Gen<sup>l</sup> Hands light Troops, lived at this place—distance 10 Miles—
- 9 Marched at 6 this morning & halted to breath near a cold stream call'd Wesawking—about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  Miles from last encampment—Then pursued our rout without rest or refreshment 12 Miles farther the Weather hot and men much fatigued, this brings us to Sheshukonuck bottom a large meadow of near 150 Acres lying on the Susquehanna, covered with a vast burthen of wild grass—we rested here this Evening and next day and Wednesday Morning—
- 11 The Army recd orders to march to Tioga, about two Miles from Sheshekonunck plain the troop forded the river where the Stream was rapid and pretty deep, notwithstanding the Men all came safe over, except one who was carried down the Current a considerable distance, and saved by Lieu<sup>t</sup> Col Barber Adj<sup>t</sup> Gen<sup>l</sup> at the hazzard of his own Life—The Cattle and pack Horses were as fortunate as the Troops—After advancing about one mile through a rich bottom covered with strong and stately Timber, which shut out the Sun, & shed a cool agreeable twilight; we unexpectedly were introduced into a Plain as large as that of Sheshekonunck, call'd *Queen Easter's* Plantation—it was on this plain near the bank of the Susquehanna that *Easter* Queen of the Seneca Tribe, dwelt in Retirement and Sullen Majesty, detached from all the Subjects of her Nation—The ruins of her Palace are still to be seen; surrounded with fruit Trees of various kinds—At the East end of the plain, the Tioga River forms a junction with the Susquehanna—At this place the Army forded & encamped about half a mile above on the Susquehanna—We



now find ourselves happily arrived at Tioga, with our Army & Fleet, our Troops generally in health and spirits; and fewer accidents happening on the march than could be expected in the same distance, thro a Mountainous, wild, uncultivated Country—It appears by the Number of hides lying on the ground that the Indians have lately had an Encampment at this place—By the place of burial seen here, one would be led to think this was once an Indian Town, but there are no Vestiges of Hutts or Wiggwoms—Whether through principle of Avarice or Curiosity, our Soldiers dug up several of their graves and found a good many laughable relicts, as a pipe, Tomahawk & Beads &c—

12<sup>th</sup> The Gen<sup>l</sup> gave orders for a fort and four Block houses to be built at this place for the Security of the Fleet and Stores which are to be left here under a pretty strong Garrison, after the Army moves into the Indian Country—and this movement will take place as soon as Gen<sup>l</sup> Clinton, who is coming down the Susquehanna, joins us with his Brigade—This afternoon Intelligence came by a small scout sent out yesterday, that the Enemy at Chemoung, an Indian Town 15 Miles distant up the Cayuga branch, were about moving off upon hearing of our Arrival at Tioga—in consequence of which the main body of our Army marched at 8 oClock this Evening in order to be ready by Day break for surprising Chemoung; our march was attended with difficulty & fatigue, having a thick Swamp and several dangerous defiles to pass,—We arrived however before the Town between dawning & Sun rise, but to our no small mortification found the Town abandon'd & two or three Indians only to be seen sculking away—According to the accounts of those who pretend to be acquainted with Indian Citys, this seems to have been a pretty Capital place—It consisted of about 40 Houses built chiefly with split and hewn Timber, covered with bark and some other rough materials, without Chimnies,

or floors, there were two larger houses which from some extraordinary rude Decorations, we took to be public Buildings; there was little Furniture left in the Houses, except Bearskins, some painted feathers, & Knicknacks—in what we supposed to be a Chapple was found indeed an Idol, which might well enough be Worshipd without a breach of the 2<sup>d</sup> Command<sup>t</sup>. on account of its likeness to anything either in heaven or Earth—About Sun rise the Gen<sup>l</sup> gave orders for the Town to be illuminated—& accordingly we had a glorious Bonfire of upwards of 30 Buildings at once: a melancholy & desperate Spectacle to the Savages many of whom must have beheld it from a Neighboring hill, near which we found a party of them had encamped last night—And from appearances the inhabitants had left the Town but a few hours before the Troops arrived—Gen<sup>l</sup> Hand with some light Infantry pursued them about a mile, when they gave him a Shot from the Top of a Ridge, & ran according to their Custom, as soon as the fire was return'd; but unfortunately for us, the Savages wounded three Officers, killed Six men and wounded seven more—they were pursued but without effect—Our next Object was their fields of Indian Corn—about 40 Acres of which we cut down and destroyed—In doing this Business, a party of Indians and Tories, fired upon three Regim<sup>ts</sup> across the River, killed one and wounded five—having compleated the Catastrophe of the Towns & fields, we arrived at Tioga about Sun set the same day, verry much fatigued having march'd not less than 34 miles in 24 hours, without rest in the Extreamest heat—

14<sup>th</sup>. No news to Day

15<sup>th</sup>. Nine Hundred chosen men under the Command of Brig: Gen<sup>l</sup> Poor are ordered to march Tomorrow morning up the Susquehanna, to meet Gen<sup>l</sup> Clinton, who is on his march to join Sullivans Army with his Brigade and is in



some Danger of being Atacked by the Enemy before he can form a Junction with our Main Army; This afternoon a Small Party of Indian's fired on some of our Men who were without the Guards after some Horse's, and Cattle, Killd and Sculped one man and Wounded another, a Party was sent out in pursuit of them but Could not come up with them—

16<sup>th</sup> General Poor March'd with his Detachment at 10 o'Clock A M. proceeded in two Collam's up the Suscuhannah River Over very rough Ground we Incampt Near the Ruins of an old town Call'd Macktowanuck the Land near the River is very Good—

17<sup>th</sup> We marchd Early this Morning Proceed 12 Miles to Owa-gea an Indian Town which was Deserted last Spring, after Planting, About the town is many Fruit Trees and many Plants, and Herbs, that are Common in our part of the Country; Hear is a Learge body of clear Intivale Covered with Grass, Our March to day Very Survear and Fatigueing Esspecelly for the Left Collom (to which I belong) as we had to pass Several Steap Hills, and Morasses—

18<sup>th</sup> We March'd Early this Morning proceeded 14 Miles to Choconant the Remains of a Learge Indian Town which has been likewise Abandoned this Summer, here we found Plenty of Cucombar's, Squashes, Turnips &c, We found About twenty Houses, Which we burnt our Days March has been More Survear than Yesterday, as we had bad Hills and Swamps, one swamp of about two Miles so Covered with Large Pines, Standing and lying which appeared as tho' Several Haricanes had been busy among since which a Tremendius Groath of Bushes About twenty feet high has sprung up so very thick as to Render the passing through them Inpractible by any troops but such as Nothing but Death can stop—at sunset we were Very agreeably alarm'd by the Report of a Cannon up the River Which was supposed to be General Clintons Evening Gun—

- 19<sup>th</sup> Our Troops were put in Motion very early this Morning after Marching about one Mile Gen<sup>l</sup> Poor Received an Exspress from General Clinton Informing him that the Latter expected to be hear by 10 o'Clock A M. this day in Consiquence of which we Return'd to our Old Incampment where General Clinton, Joind us at 10 o'Clock with two Thousand Men—including Officers, Boatsman &c. he has two Hundred and Eight Beautoes with Provisions Ammunition &c after Mutual Congratulations and Complements the whole Proceeded down the River to Owagea and Incampt this Evening, the town of Owegea was made a burnfire of to Grace our Meating our General Course from Tiago to Choconant is about N. East—
- 20<sup>th</sup> We have very heavy Rain to day and no tents but we are obliged to ride it out—
- 21<sup>st</sup> We March'd early Proceeded within 10 miles of Tiago—
- 22<sup>d</sup> We March at 6 of the Clock and at 11 arrived in Camp where we were Saluted With thirteen Cannon and a tune of Colonel Procters Band of Musick—
- 23 We are prepairing to March with all Possible Exsperdition about five o'Clock this afternoon a Very shocking accidnt happend in our Camp, a soldier Very accidently Dischargd a Muskett Chargd with a ball and Several Buck shott, three of Which unfortunately struck Captain Kimbell of Colonel Cilleys Regiment who was standing at some Distance in a tent with several other officers in such a Manner that he Exsperied within 10 or 15 Munits—is Universally Lemented as he was assteamed by all who knew him—one of the Shott wounded a soldier, in the leg who was some Distance from the tent that Captain Kimble was in
- 24<sup>th</sup> The Remains of the Unfortunate Captain Kimble was Inter'd at 11 o'Clock with the Honours of War—Attended by General Poor and almost all the officers of the Brigade with Colonel Procter's Band of Musick—the Army is Very busy in Prepairing to March—



- 25<sup>th</sup> We find Great Difficulty in Gitting Ready to March for want of a Sufficiently Number of Horses to Carry our Provitions Ammunition &c. However we are to Move to Morrow without fail with Twenty Seven Days Flower and live Beef Our whole force that will March from hear is about five Thousand Men officers Included, with nine Pieces of Artillery,—and three of the Anyda Warriors Arrived hear this afternoon who are a going on with ous as Guides—two Runner's Arrived from Colonel Broadhead at fourt Pitt—Informing that Colonel Broadhead is on his way with about Eight Hundred Men against the Western Indians—
- 26<sup>th</sup> Our Army March at 12 °Clock in the order laid down in the Plan and Order of March & Battle a Garrison of about three Hundred Men left at this Place under the Command of Colonel Shreve the Army Proceeded about 4 Miles and Incampt—Mr. Lodge a Gentleman who Survey'd Marchd from Easton with us is going on with us in Order to take an Actual Survey of the Country who measured the Road as We go on—
- 27<sup>th</sup> The Army Marched at Eight °Clock, our March was Very much Impeaded by the Artillery and Ammunition Wag-gons which we have to Clear a Road for through thick Woods & Difficult Defiles the Army are obligd to Halt Seven Hours to Day at one Defile for the Artillery & Bag-gage—at 10 °Clock we arrived at our Incamping Ground a learge body of Clear Intervale where we found Seventy or Eighty Acres of fine Corn our March has not been more than 6 Miles to Day—
- 28<sup>th</sup> As we had the Corn to destroy before we March it was two °Clock P. M. before we moved off the Ground by Reason of a High Mountain that shutt Down to the River so as to Render Passing with the Artillery Impractable we Wear obligd to found the River twice before we could git to Shumung with the Artillery Pack Horses and one Brigade

the Water was so deep as Rendered fording Very Difficult & Dangerous—A Considerable quantity of lower ammunition and other Baggage was lost in the River at 10 in the evening the Rear of the Army arrived at Shemung where we Incampd, our March to day has not been more than four Miles, a small Scout of ours arrived to day which Inform'd that they Discover'd a large Incampment about 6 Miles from Shemung a small Party of Indians fired on a small Party of our men to day that ware setting fire to some Houses over the River, but did no Damage—

29<sup>th</sup> The army March'd at Nine o'Clock A. M. proceeded 5 Miles where our light Troops Discovered a line of Brest-work about eighty Rods in their frunt, which upon Recon-iting, was found to extend half a mile in length on very Advantageous Ground, with a large Brook in frunt, the River on their Right, a High Mountain on their left, and a large settlement in their Rear, called Newtown; their works ware very Artfully Mask'd with Green Bushes, so that I think the Discovering them was Accadental as it Fortunate to us, Schurmishing on both sides Commens'd soon after we Discover'd their works which Continued untill our Disposition was made which was as follows (viz)—The Artilery to form in frunt of their works, Coverd by General hand Brigade, General Poor's and Riflemen to turn the Enemy's left, and fall in their Rear supported by General Clintons Brigade, General Maxwells Brigade to form a Corps D'eserve; the left flanking Division and lite Infantry to Pursue the Enemy when they left their works, at 3 o'Clock P. M. General Poor's began his march by Columns from the right of reg<sup>t</sup> by files we Passd a very thick Swamp so Coverd with bushes for near a mile that we found great difficulty in keeping in order but by Gen<sup>l</sup> Poor's Great Prudence and Good Conduct We Proceeded in Much better order then I Exspected we could Possibly have done—after Passing this Swamp we Inclind to the



left, crossed the Creek that runs frunt of the Enemys work: on both sides of this was a large Number of New Houses, but no land Cleard; soon after we passd this Creek we began to assen'd the Mountain that coverd the Enemys left, Immediately after we began to assend the Mountain we ware surluted by a brisk fire from a body of the Indians who were posted on this Mountain for the Purpose of Preventing any troops Turning the left of their Works, at the same Instant that they began to fire on us, they rais'd the Indian Yell, or war hoop the Riflemen kept up a Scattering fire while we form'd the line of Battle which which was dun Exceeding quick—we then advanced Rapped with fix'd Bayonetts with out fireing a Gun till we had gained the Summett of the Hill, which was half a mile, altho' they kept a stady fire on us all the while; we then gave them a full Voley which obliged them to take to their heels, Colonel Reeds Regiment whis was on the left of the Brigade, was more servearly Attacted then any other part of the Brigade, with Prevented his advancing as fast as the Rest. as we assended the Mountain Lieu<sup>t</sup> Cass of our Regiment Tommahawked one of the Indians with the Indians own Tommahawk that was slightly wounded, our Regiment being next to Colonel Reed's on the left and the Colonel finding he was still very warmly Engag'd nearly on the same Ground he was first attacted ordered the Regiment to face to the Right about and moved to his assistance, we soon Discoverd a body of Indians, Turning his Right, which he Turned about by a full fire from the Regiment, This was a Very seasonable, Relief to Colonel Reed who was the very moment we fired on them that were turning his right, found himself so Surrounded that he was Reduced to the Necessity of Retreating or Making a Desperate push with the Bayonett: the latter of which he had put in Execution the moment we gave him Relief; The Enemy now all left the field of Action,

with precepitation and in Great Confusion Persued by our Light Infantry above 3 Miles They left a Number of their Packs, Blanketts &c. on the Ground—half an hour before the Action became serious with General Poor's Brigade, the Artilery began to play upon their works—which soon made their works, too warm for them, we found of the Enemy on the field of Action 11 Indians Warriors dead and one Sqaw, took one whiteman & one Negro Prisoners; from whom we larnt that Butler Com-manded hear, that Brant had all the Indians that Could be Mustered in the five Nations that there was about 200 Whites, a few of which were British Regular's Troops, it seem's that their whole force was about 1500.—The Pris-oners Inform us that their loss in killd and wounded was Very Great—the most of which they According to Cus-tome carried off—our loss in General Poor's Brigade, killd and Wounded is (viz<sup>t</sup>)

	Killd		Wounded
Maj <sup>r</sup>	0	1	Maj <sup>r</sup> Titcumb
Cap <sup>t</sup>	0	1	Cap <sup>t</sup> Clays
Lieu <sup>t</sup>	0	1	Died the same night Leu <sup>t</sup> MacCaully
Ens <sup>n</sup>	0	0	
Serj <sup>t</sup>	1	0	
Privates	2	29	
	—	—	
	3	32	

our loss in Killd and Wounded in the whole Army except Gen<sup>l</sup> Poor's Brigade was Killd none wounded 4 Privates at Sunsett the Army Incampt on the Ground lately Occu-pied by the Enemy—

30<sup>th</sup> The Army Remaind on the Ground to day & Destroyd a vast Quantity of Corn and about 40 Houses—The Army by a Request of General Sullivan—Agreed to live on half a Pound of Beef and half a Pound of flower Pr Day, for the



future as long as it might found Necessary our Provisions being short—This night the sick and Wounded together with the Ammunition Waggon, and four of our Heaviest Pieces of Artillery, are sent back to Tiago by water, which will Enable the Army to proceed with much Greater ease and Rapidity our Course from Shemung to hear is about N. West—

31<sup>st</sup> We marchd at 10 o'Clock, The Right Collumn Marchd on the hill some Distance from the River The left Collumn and Artillery Marchd by the River The land we March'd over very fine found and Destroyd Several fields of Corn and Houses, Proceeded five miles to where the Alliganer and Kaiyugea Branches of the River unite—on the Point between these two Streames was a Very Prity town Calld Kannawalohalla, which from appearances was Deserted this morning—some Boats were seen by our advanced Party, going up the Allagana branch, a Number of feather beds were burnt in the Houses, our Soldiers found Several Large Chests Buried which were filld with a Great Variety of household furniture and many other articles: after halting hear an hour we Proceeded between the two Rivers on a fine Plain about 5 Miles and Incampt a Detachment was sent up the Alagana Branch in Pursuit of the Enemy.

Sept 1<sup>st</sup> The Detachment that was sent up the River in Pursuite of the Enemy Returnd this Morning, they Could not Overtake the Enemy, but found and Destroy'd Several large field of Corn—The Army Marchd at 10 o'Clock proceeded about 4 miles on a Plain then Came to what is Calld the Beir Swamp Which exstends to French Katoreen 9 Miles, the Groth is Pine, Spruc and Hamlock—Exceeding thick. a Small River runs through it which we had to Cross about twenty times on each side of this Swamp is a Ridge of Tremendious hills—which the Colomn were obliged to march on having a rode to open for the Artillery we proceeded very slowly at Dark when we had got within

about 3 miles of the town we found ourselves in a Most horrid thick Mirery Swamp which Rendered our Proceeding so Difficult that it was 10 o'Clock in the evening before we arrived at the town where we found fires burning and every other appearance of the Enemys having left the town this afternoon, This town Consists of about 30 Houses's and their is a Number of fruit trees in this town. the streams we Crossed so often to Day runs through this town and into the Seneca Lake, the South end of which is but 3 miles from this town.

2<sup>d</sup> The Army laying Still to day to Recrute and Destroy the town Corn &c a Very old Squaw was found in the Bushes to day who was was not able to go off with the rest, who Informs us that Butler with the Torys went from this Place with all the Boats the day before yesterday, the Indian Warriors Moved off their familyes and Effects, yesterday Morning, and then Returned and stay'd till sun sett, she says the Squaws and young Indians were very loth to leve the town, but were for giving Themselves up, but the warriors would not agree to it, Several Horses and Cattle were found at this Place, a Party of light troops were sent this morning to Indevour to over take some of the Indians, who left this place last evening, but Returnd without being able to Effect it—

3<sup>d</sup> The army March'd, at 8 o'Clock after proceeding 3 Miles over Rough Ground Came oppersit the end of the Lake and then found good marching the land very fine proceeded 9 miles and Incampt at 4 o'Clock P. M. near the side of the Lake This lake is about 40 Miles in Length and from 2 to 5 miles wide and Runs Nearly North, and South—

4<sup>th</sup> The Army march'd at 10 o'Clock proceeded 4 miles to a Small Village where we found several fine fields of Corn after Destroying the Village and Corn Marchd 8 miles further and Incampt, the land we pass'd over to Day is Exceeding good—



5<sup>th</sup> The Army Marchd at 10 o'Clock, proceeded 5 miles to and Indian town, Call'd Candaia or Appletown where there is an old orchard of 60 trees and many other fruits. The town Consists of 20 Houses, Very Beautifully situated near the lake, in the town are three Sepulchres which are very Indian fine, where I suppose that some of their Chiefs are Deposited, at this town we found a man by the Name of Luke Sweatland who was taken by the Savages at Wyoming last Summer and was adopted into an Indian family in this town Where has lived or Rather stayd 12 months, he appeared quite overjoyd at Meeting some of his Acquaintance from Wyoming who are in our Army, he says that the Savages were very much stratend for food, from April till the corn was fitt to Rost, that his being kept so short on't for Provisions Prevented his attempting to Desert altho' he had frequent opportunities by being sent 20 miles to the salt Spring to make salt, which spring he says afforded Salt for all the Savages in this part of the Country, he says that the Indians were very much allarm'd, and Dejected at being beat at Newtown they told him they had a Great many wounded which they sent of by Water, we Destroyd Great quantities of Corn here, an Exspress arrived this afternoon from Tiago by which we had Account that Abner Dearborn was Dead he was wounded at Newtown—

6<sup>th</sup> The Horses and Cattle were so scatterd this morning that the Army Could not march untill 3 o'Clock P M. proceeded 3 miles and Incampt oppersit to where we Incampt on the other side of the Lake we Discover'd, a Settlement where We could see some Indians driving Horses—

7<sup>th</sup> We took up our March at 7 oClock, proceeded 8 Miles and Came to the end of the Lake, where we Exspected the enemy would give us another Battle, as they might have a very great advantage over us as we forded the outlett of the Lake, when we arrived in sight of the ford we halted,

and Several Scouts were sent out to Reconitree, the Adjacent wood when we found the Course was Clear, the army passd the ford proceeded 3 Miles by the end of the Lake, and found a small Settlement which we Destroyd—the Village and proceeded 2 Miles from the Lake, and Arrived at a large town Calld Kannadasaga which is Considered as the Capital of the Senecas and is Calld the Senecas Castle. It Consists of about 40 Houses very Irreguallerly Situate in the Center of which is the Ruins of a Stockade fort and Blockhouse, here is a Considerable Number of apple trees and other fruit trees and a few Acres of land Covered with English Grass. Their Cornfields which are very largẽ are at some Distance from the town, we found in this town a White Child about three years old which we suppose was a Captive in the Houses was left a Number of things some Corn and many of their Curiosities—

8<sup>th</sup> The army lay still to day the Riflemen were sent to Destroy a town about 8 miles from hence on the west side of the lake calld Gagssonghgwa we found a Number of Stacks of hay not far from this town which we set fire to—a scout of ours burnt a town to day about 10 miles from this N. East on the Road to the Kauyuga Settlement Calld shaiyus or large falls—

9<sup>th</sup>. By Reason of a Rain last night the Army did not march till 12 o'Clock, all our sick Inverlids were sent back this morning to Tiago under an asscort of 50 men we proceeded 3 miles through old fields Covered with Grass, then Entered a thick swamp, Called the ten mile swamp we proceeded four miles in this swamp, with Great Difficulty Crossd a Considerable stream of Water and Incampt—

10<sup>th</sup> The army Marched at 8 o'Clock proceeded through the swamp and pas'd a large body of Clear land March'd one mile and came to a small Lake calld Cannandaquah, we fourded the Outlet of this lake, proceeded one mile and



came to a Very Pretty Town Called Cannandaquah, Consisting of about 30 Houses, Much better built Than any that I have seen before, Near this town Discover'd Large fields of Corn, near which we Incampt—Several Small partys were Order'd out to Destroy the Corn this afternoon—

- 11<sup>th</sup> The Army Marched at six o'Clock 14 miles to an Indian Town call Anyayea Situate on a body of Clear Intervale Land Near a Small Lake of the same name This town Consists of 11 Houses near it was Several Corn field, the land we Marchd over to day is very good and a Great part of it very thinly Wooded and Covered with Grass it appears as if it had be Cultivated too before—
- 12 The Weather being fowle the army did not March till 12 o'Clock, a Small fort assteblish'd hear, where we leave our Provisions and Ammunition Except what will be Necessary to carry us to Chenesee (about 30 miles) and bring us back hear Again, one piece of Artillery is left hear at this Place, the Army Marchd 11 miles this afternoon over a body of Excellent land.
- 13 March'd at 7 o'Clock proceeded 2 Miles to a Town Calld Kaneysas or Yucksea, Consisting of 18 Houses Situate on an Exellant Intervale near a small lake we found a Large quantity of Corn, beens, Squash, Potatoes, Cucumbers, Water Millions &c. &c. in & about this town the Army halted 4 Hour's to Destroy the Town, the Corn & to build a Bridge over a Creek—at this town live a very Great noted Warriar Calld the Great tree who has made great Pretensions of Friendship to us and has been to Philadelphia and to General Washington's head Quarters since the War Commenced, and has Received a Number of presents from General Washington and from the Congress—Yet we suppose that he is with Butler against us, a Party of Riflemen and some others 26 in Number, under the Command of Lieut Boyd of the Rifle Corps was sent out last night to a

town 7 miles from here, to make what Discovry he could and to Return at day brake—4 of his men went into the town and found it abandoned, but found 3 or 4 scatering Indians about it one of which they killd & Sculp'd, then Return'd to Lieu<sup>t</sup> Boyd—after sunrise who lay at some Distance from the town—he then sent 4 men to Report to General Sullivan what he had Discover'd and Moved on slowly with his party towards Camp after he had proceeded about half way to Camp he halted some time exspecting the army to meet him. he after halting some time sent 2 men to Camp who Discoverd some Scatering Indians and Return'd to Lieu<sup>t</sup> Boyd again he then March'd on his party towards Camp Discoverd some scatering Indians one of which they Killd he soon found himself Nearly Surrounded and Attackd by three Hundred Indians and torys he after fighting them some time attempted to Retreat but found it Impractiable 6 or 7 of his Men did Make their Eascape the Remainder finding themselves Compleatly Surrounded ware Determined to sell themselves as dear as possible and bravely fight on till every Man was killd but 2 Whites was taken one of which was Lieu<sup>t</sup> Boyd some of the men that made their esscape came to camp and Inform'd the General of the Matter, upon which General Hand with his light troops was sent to the Place of Action but too late, they left all their Packs, Hutts Baggage &c. When the Action it began which General Hand found after he had finishd the Bridge, the Army March on proceeded 7 miles to the before mentioned town and Incampt, this town Consists of twenty two Houses, situate on a small River that falls into the Chenesee River ab<sup>t</sup> 2 miles below here and is calld Gaghehegualahate.

- 14 The General Exspected to have found the Great Chenesee town within 2 miles of hear on this Side of the River but on Reconiting found that the town is 6 miles from here and on the other side of the River the Army was Imployd



untill 12 o'Clock in Destroying the Corn which we found in Great Plenty—At 12 oClock he marchd after fourding the small River that the town stands on, and passing through a small Grove of wood we enterd upon what is Calld the Great Chenesee Flatts, which is a vast body of Clear Intervale 12 or 14 miles up and down the River and Several miles back from the River on both sides and Covered with Grass from 5 to 8 feet high, and so thick that a man can get through it but very slowly—our Army appeard to Very Great advantage Moving on in the exact order of March laid down in the Plan—but Very often we that were on Horseback could see nothing but the Mens Guns above the Grass—After Marching about two miles on this flatt we Came to the River, which we forded pass'd over a Body of Flatts on the other side and assended onto Oak land and proceeded 4 Miles and arrived to the town which we found Deserted, here we found the Bodys of Lieut<sup>t</sup> Boyd and one other Man, mangled in a Most Horrid Manner, from appearance it seems that they were tied to two trees near which they lay and first they were survearly whipt<sup>t</sup>, then their Tongues were Cutt out, their finger Nailes Pluck<sup>t</sup> of, their Eyes plucked out, then Speard in Several Placess, and after they had Venterd their Hellish spite Cutt off their Heads and Skind them and then left them.. This was a most Horried Spectable to behold—and from which we are taught the Necessity of fighting these more than Devils to the last moment Rather than fall into their hands alive—This is much the Largest town we have met with it Consists of more than 100 Houses, is Situate on an Exelland Piece of Land in a large bow of the River; it appears that the Savages left this town in a Great Hurry and Confusion, as they left large Quantities of Corn Huskd and some in Heeps not huskd and many other signs of Confusion—

15<sup>th</sup> At 6 oClock the whole Army was turnd out to Destroy the

Corn in & about this town which we found in great plenty, we were from 6 oClock to 2 oC<sup>k</sup> P. M. in Destroying the Corn & Houses it is Generally thought we have Destroyd 20,000 Bushels of Corn at this place, The Method we took to Destroy it was to make large fires with parts of Houses and other wood and then piling the Corn on the fire which affectually Destroyd the whole of it a Woman with a Child came to us to day who was taken at Wyoming when that Place was Cutt off her Husband and one Child was killd and Sculped in her sight when she was taken, She Informed us that Butler and Brant with the Toryes & Indians left the Place in a Great Hurry the 13<sup>th</sup> Instant and are gone to Niagara which is 80 miles from hence where they exspect that we are going. She says the Indians were very uneasy with Butler and their other leders and are in Great Distress, we have now go to the end of our Rout, and are turning our faces Homeward, at 3 oClock we faced to the Right about and Marchd in High Spirits Recrossing the Chenesee River and Incampt on the Chenesee Flatts, this place Lays about North West from Tiago—

- 16<sup>th</sup> A Number of fields of Corn was Discoverd this Morning at Different places which Imployd the Army untill 10 o'Clock in Destroying them At 1 oClock P M. we Recrossed at the stream Gaghehegwalahale and at 4 oClock. arrived at Kanigsas or Chocksett and Incampt 14 of Lieut Boyd's Party ware found Dead this afternoon near together Sculped, Honyose an Anyder Indian of Considerable note that was with Lieut Boyd's was among the Dead—
- 17<sup>th</sup> The Army marchd at sunrise and at 10 oClock arrived at Anyoye where we found all safe—
- 18<sup>th</sup> The army Marchd at 8 o'Clock proceeded to Kannandaquah and Incampt four Onyder Indians one of which is a Schecam met us to day who say that 100 of the Onydars and Tuskororas set out with them to join us but



meeting an Indian that Left us at Kannadasaga when we were advancing who told them we Marchd on so Rappadly that they could not Overtake us so as to be of any Service, they all Returned but these four—

19<sup>th</sup> The Army March'd to Kanadasagea an Exspress arrived from General Washington to day with Letters, by which we are assured that Spain has Declared War with England and that the Grand fleet of France and Spain, have formed a junction at Sea at several towns that our Army has Destroyed, we found Dogs hung up on Poles 12 or 15 feet High which we are told is Done by way of Sacrifice, that when they are unfortinate in war they Sacrifice two Dogs in the Manner above Mentioned to Appease their Amaginary God one of the Dog skins they suppose is Converted into a\*—————& the other into a Tobacco Pouch for their God, the Woman that came to us at Chinesee says that the Savages Hung up Dogs Immediately after the Battle at Newtown—

20<sup>th</sup> Five Hundred Men are Detachd under the Command of Colonel Butler who is to March round the Kaiyuga Lake and Destroy the Kaiyuga Settlement on the East end of the Lake 100 Men under the Command of Colonel Gannasvorth are ordered to go and Destroy the Mohawk Castle on the Mohawk River and to proceed from thence on to Albany, the army Marchd this afternoon Crossd the Outlet of the Seneca Lake and Incampt

21<sup>st</sup> Two Hundred men was Ordered under the Comm'd of Colonel Dearborn to Proceed to the West side of the Kieyuga Lake, from thence to the South end, to Destroy what Settlement Corn &c we might find in our way at 8 o'Clock we Marchd and proceeded N East Corse about 8 Miles and found 3 Wigwam's in the woods and some small Paches of Corn Squash Water Millions Cucumbers &c and about 15 Houses which we could not take.

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\* Undecipherable.—Ed.

After Destroying this Little Village proceeded 4 miles to the Lake where we found a Very Pritty town, of 10 Houses and a Considerable quantity of Corn all which we burnt, We Discoverd another town about one Mile above this which we likewise Destroyd Skannayutenates after Destroying this town we Marchd one mile & came to a New town Consisting of Nine Houses Which we Destroyd and proceed one Mile & found one Large House which we set fire to & march'd on 2 Miles, further and Incampt the Land we March'd through to day is Exceeding fine—

22<sup>nd</sup> We marchd half an Hour before Sunrise proceeded about 5 mile's and came to the Ruins of a town that a Party of our Men when the Army was advancing who missed their way and happend to fall in at this town We found a Large field of Corn and 3 Houses. we Gethered the Corn and burnt it in the Houses, this town is Calld Swanyawanah We March'd from this place five miles and found a Wigwam, with three Squaws and one young Indian who was a a Cripple—We took two of the Squaws who ware about 40 years old and Marchd on about three Miles and found one Hutt and a field o Corn, which we Burnt and proceeded about four miles and Incampt—

23<sup>rd</sup> March'd at Sunrise proceeded without any path or track or any parson who was ever in this part of the Country before to Guide us, and the land is Horridly Rough, and Bushey that it was hardly Possable for us to advance however with Great Difficultie and fatigue we proceeded 9 Miles to the end of a Large Cape which we exspected was the end of the Lake but found it was not, from hear we Marchd off two or three Miles from the Lake and then proceeded by a Point of Compass 8 Miles and Came to the end of the Lake and Incampt this Lake is about forty miles long and from two to five miles in Wedth and Runs nearly North and South Parralell with the Seneca Lake and they are from 8 to 18 Miles apart—



- 24<sup>th</sup> Marchd at Sunrise proceeded about 3 Miles on the high land and Cam to a path which led us to two Hutts and some Corn fields after burning them Hutts and Corn Several Small parties was sent out Different ways to look for a large town, we had been inform'd was not Many Miles from the end of the Lake—the parties found 10 or 12 Scattering Houses and a Number of Large Corn fields on and Near the Stream that falls into the Lake—after burning and Destroys Several Houses and Corn fields a Small Party was sent out and Discovered the town about 3 Miles from the End of the Lake on the above mentioned Stream the town and its Sububs Consisted of about 25 Houses and is Call'd Corcargonett and is the Capital of a Small Nation or Tribe Call'd ——— our Party was Im- ploy'd from 9 o'Clock a' m, 'till Sunsett—we Exspected to have met Colonel Butler with his Party at this Town—
- 25<sup>th</sup> March'd at Sunrise for Katareen's town where we was ordered to Join the Main Army We proceeded a Due West corse over a terrible Rough Mountain's Country about 4 oClock P. M. arrived at Katareens, but the army was gone forward, we proceeded six miles in what is Calld the Bear swamp and Incampt
- 26<sup>th</sup> March'd at Sunrise and at 12 oClock Join'd the Main Army at Kannawalohala which is four miles from where we fought the Enemy the 29<sup>th</sup> of August last, the Army had a Day of Rejoycing here yesterday in Consequence of the News from Spain—
- 27<sup>th</sup> Some Detachments were sent out on the Allagana River to Destroy what Houses and Corn field they might find—
- 28<sup>th</sup> The Same party that was Sent Yesterday ware sent again to Day, further up the River to Destroy a tory Settlement —That a Small party Discover'd yesterday and a Large Detachment was sent off to Compleat the Distruction of Corn at and about Newtown at 12 o'Clock Butler arrived with his party in Camp, on their Rout the lake they

Burnt and Destroyd Several towns and a Vast Quantity of Corn—

29<sup>th</sup> The Army Marchd to Shemung—

30 Arrived at Tiago where we Ware Saluted with 13 Cannon which we Answard with the same Number—Colonel Shreve who Commanded the Garrison made an Entertainment for the General and field Officers this afternoon the afternoon was Spend in festivity and Mirth Joy appeard in every Countenance, we now have finish'd our Campaign and Gloriously too—

Octr 1<sup>st</sup> We are Preparing to March to Wyoming

2<sup>d</sup> General Sullivan Made an Entertainment for all the General and field off<sup>s</sup> to day This evening we had an Indian Dance at Head Quarters the Anydo Sachem was Master of the Ceremonies

3<sup>d</sup> The Army is preparing to March for Wyoming—

4<sup>th</sup> The Army March'd fifteen miles down the River—

5<sup>th</sup> The Whole Army Imbark on board Boats Except was Necessary to Drive the Pack Horses and Cattle—

7<sup>th</sup> Arrived at Wyoming in High Spirits During the Whole of this Survear Campaign our Loss in Kill'd, Died, of Wounds & Sickness Did not Exceed fifty men—

8<sup>th</sup> General Sullivan Received an Exspress This Evening from General Washington Informing him that Count De Easting is on the Coast Near New York with a fleet and Army—In Consiquence of Which General Sullivan's is Orderd to March the 16<sup>th</sup> Instant for Head Quarters—

9<sup>th</sup> Nothing new to Day—

10<sup>th</sup> The Army March'd for Easton &c.—

15<sup>th</sup> Arived their the Army has March'd from Tiago to Easton (156 Miles through a Mountainious Rough Wilderness) in 8 Days with the Artilery, and Baggage, a Most Exstrodinary March indeed—

16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> Remaind at Easton, We are Inform'd that Count De Eastaing has taken Several Ships of War. to-



gether with all the Transports and Troops, the Enemy had at and Near Georgia, he is Expected Dayly at New York—

25<sup>th</sup> Our Army is to March the 27<sup>th</sup> Instant toward Head Quaters—An Exspress arrived this Day from Head Quaters which Informs that the Enemy have avacuated Their port at Kings Ferry and have Retir'd to New York—

General Sullivan's Army at Wyoming Consists of the troops following (Viz<sup>t</sup>)—Maxwell's Brigade Consisting of Ogdons, Daytons, Shreaves and Spencer's Regiments—

Poor's Brigade Consisting of, Cilleys, Reeds Scammells Courtlands Regiments—Hands Brigade Consisting of the German and Hubleys Regiments, Shots Corps and Spauldings Company—

Wyoming July 31<sup>st</sup> 1779 This Day the Army Marchd for Tiago in the following Order—

Head Quarters Easton May 24<sup>th</sup> 1779 When the Army shall be fully Assembled the Following Arrangements are to take place;—

Lite troops Com- manded by Gen- eral Hand	{ Hubleys Regiment { Shots Corps— { Six Compy of Rangers
	{ Butlers Regiment— { Morgans Corps { and all the { Volatiers that { may Join the ar- { my—
Poor's Brigade to Consist of—	{ Cilleys, Reeds, Scammills { & Courtlands Regiments { to form the Right of the { first Line
Maxwells Brigade to Consist of—	{ Ogdon's Daytons { Shreeves and { Spencers Regi- { ments to form { the left of the front { line
Clinton's Brigade to Consist of	{ Late Livingston's Du- { bois's Garmsworths { and Oldens Regiment { to form the second line { of Reserve—

The Right of the first line to be Covered by 100 Men Draughted from Poor's Brigade—

The left to be Covered by 100 men to be Draughted from Maxwells Brigade;—

Each flank of the second line to be Covered by 50 Men Draughted from Clintons Brigade—

The flanking Divisions on the Right to Consist of the German Battalion and a Hundred men Draughted from the Whole line—

The left flanking Division to Consist of Hartlies and Daytons Regiment, with a Draught of 100 Men—

The Order of Battle and the Order of March are Represented on the Annex'd Plan—and are to be attended to at all times when the Situation of the Country will Possibly admit and when a Deviation takes Place it must be Carried no further than the Necessaty of the time Requires Order of March the Light Corps will advance by the Right of Company's in files and keep half a mile in front—

Maxwells Brigade will advance by the Right in files, sections or Platoons as the Country will admit—

Poor's Brigade to advance by its left in the same manner—

Clintons Brigade will Advance by Right of Regiment in Platoons, section's or files as the Country will admit—all the Covering partys and Flanking Divisions on the Right will advance by the Left; and those on the Left by the Right—The Artillery and Pack Horses will March in the Center—Should the Army be attackted in front while on 'its march—the Light Corps will Immediately form to Repulse the Enemy—

The flanking Divisions will Indevour to Gain the flank and Rear of the Enemy—While the line is forming the Pack Horses will in all Cases fall into the Position represented on the annexed Plan—Should the Enemy attack either flank, the flanking Division will form a front and sustain the Attack till Reinforced, in which Case a part of the Light Corps is to be Attachd to Gain the Enemys flank and Rear, the Covering Party of the two lines will Move to Gain the other flank Should the Enemy Attack our Rear the 2 lines will face and form a line frunt to the Enemy—the Covering Parties of the first line will Move to sustain it while the flanking Divisions face about and Endeavour to Gain their flank and Rear—Should the Light troops be Driven back they will pass through the Intervale of the Main Army, and form in the Rear. Should the Enemy in an Ingagement with the Army when form'd endanger either flank, the Covering Party, will Move up to Lengthen the line and so Much as may be found Necessary, from the flanking Divisions will Display outwards to prevent the attempt of the Enemy succeeding—



The Light Corps will have their Advances and flank Guard a good Distance from the Main Body—The flanking Divisions will furnish flank Guards and the second line a Rear Guard for the Main Army—

When we find the Light Corps Engaged with the Enemy in front the front of the Pack Horses will halt and the Rear Close up—While the Column Moves at a small Distance Closes and Displays Column's which will bring the Horses in the position Represented in the Plan for Order of Battle, should the attack be made on Either flank or Rear the Horse's must be kept in the Position they are in at the Commencement of the attack unless other order's are then Given—

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# THE BUILDING AND VOYAGE OF THE GRIFFON IN 1679.

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BY O. H. MARSHALL.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, FEBRUARY 3, 1863; AND REVISED BY THE AUTHOR, AUGUST, 1879.

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ON the seventh day of August, 1679, two centuries ago, a small vessel left her anchorage near the foot of Squaw Island, and ascended the strong rapids of the Niagara into Lake Erie. She was a peculiar craft, of foreign model, full rigged and equipped, having many of the appointments of a man-of-war. A battery of seven small cannon, with some musquetry, constituted her armament. A flag, bearing the device of an eagle, floated at her mast-head, and on her bow she bore a carved griffin, in honor of the arms of Count Frontenac, then Governor-General of Canada. By the aid of a strong northeast wind, she endeavored to pass up the channel between the bold bluff now crowned by the ruins of Fort Porter, and the rocky islet, since known by the name of Bird Island. Being unable to overcome the rapid current, a dozen men were landed on the sandy beach which bordered the eastern shore, and with tow

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NOTE.—This paper was originally communicated to the Buffalo Historical Society, February 3d, 1863. Since then, it has been revised and enlarged, with a view to its publication among the Collections of the Society.

The present month of August completes two hundred years since the *Griffon* sailed from the Niagara to the Upper Lakes. This has been, for that reason, considered the appropriate month for the appearance of this paper.—ED.



lines, drew her, by main force, up the stream. A group of swarthy Senecas watched her movements, shouting their admiration at the strange spectacle.

When the vessel had reached the lake, the men on shore embarked—the *Te Deum* was chanted by the grateful crew—their artillery and fire-arms were discharged—and the vessel, turning her prow toward the southwest, boldly ploughed, without chart or guide, the untried waters of the lake.\*

That vessel was the *Griffon*, and her projector and builder the adventurous Cavelier de la Salle.

This distinguished explorer was born in Rouen, France, on the twenty-second day of November, 1643. Educated by the Jesuits, he became, for a short time, a member of their Order. He came to America in 1666, and soon after visited and descended the Ohio; and, as some claim, anticipated Jolliet and Marquette in the discovery of the Mississippi. His western explorations revealed the value and foreshadowed the growth of the fur trade, then dependent for transportation on the bark canoe, or the sluggish pirogue of the Indian. The discovery of an overland route to China, and the development of the copper mines of the Interior, were additional stimuli to draw him from the luxury and ease of Europe, to share in the hardships and privations of savage life among the lakes and rivers, forests and prairies of the Northwest. Fort Frontenac was chosen as the base of his operations; and he agreed to rebuild and maintain it at his own expense, provided the French government would grant him certain exclusive privileges. These were accorded in May, 1675.† He immediately took possession of the fort, the foundations of which had been laid by Count Frontenac two years before, and enlarged and strengthened its defences.

In 1678, a brigantine of ten tons had been built for the use

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\* Hennepin, *Louisiana*, p. 29. Hennepin, *Nouvelle Découverte*, p. 119. Margry, *Découvertes*, vol. i., p. 445.

† Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., pp. 333, 437.

of the French on Lake Ontario.\* To facilitate his enterprises further west, it became necessary for La Salle to build a larger vessel above the Cataract of Niagara. He first dispatched a party of fifteen men by canoe to the Upper Lakes, with goods of the value of six or seven thousand francs. They had orders to establish friendly relations with the Indians; to collect provisions for the use of the contemplated expedition, and to gather furs for the return voyage.† He also sent carpenters and other artisans, under charge of the Sieur de la Motte, to build a fort at Niagara, and the vessel above the Falls.‡

The chief companions he selected to aid him in these undertakings, were the Chevalier Henry de Tonty, the Sieur la Motte de Lussière, and Father Louis Hennepin.

Tonty was a Neapolitan by birth. Having fled from the Revolution of Naples, he entered the French Marine in 1668, in which he served four years. Having lost his right hand at Vintimille by the bursting of a grenade, he supplied the deficiency by a metallic arrangement covered with a glove.‖ This he used with marked effect in his encounters with the Indians, and thus obtained the sobriquet of the "Iron Hand." He joined La Salle in his last voyage from France, in July, 1678,\*\* and faithfully adhered to the fortunes of his chief, until the death of the latter in 1687. He was distinguished for zeal, courage and capacity. He commanded the reinforcements which were brought from the West to aid De Nonville in his expedition against the Senecas, in 1687. He died at Fort St. Louis, on Mobile bay, towards the close of the year 1704. His father was the author of the financial scheme, called after him "Tontine," which was adopted in France, and subsequently introduced into America.††

La Motte de Lussière was a captain in the celebrated regi-

\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 72.

† Hennepin, La., p. 19. Le Clerq, Etab. de la Foi, vol. ii., p. 141.

‡ Margry, Découv., vol. i., pp. 440, 575.

‖ La Potherie, vol. ii., p. 144.

\*\* Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 449.

†† Margry, Mémoires Inédits, p. 3.



ment of *Carignan-salières*, and accompanied La Salle on his first visit to America.\* He proved, in the sequel, unfaithful to his commander by adhering to his enemies.† After some experience he found himself unfitted to endure the hardships of the New World, and gladly returned to civilized life.‡

Louis Hennepin was a Flemish Recollect of the Franciscan Order, and came to America in 1675 with Bishop Laval. He established a Mission at Fort Frontenac, where he remained two and a half years. He then returned to Quebec, and after undergoing the necessary religious preparation, reascended the St. Lawrence to Fort Frontenac, and joined the expedition of La Salle. He was proud of his association with his distinguished chief, and devoted as much time to his service as he could well spare from the duties of his priestly office. He was ambitious and unscrupulous, and after the death of La Salle, endeavored to appropriate some of the honors which the latter had acquired by his celebrated discoveries in the West. He published two works, one of which is styled "Description de la Louisiane," printed in 1683, and the other "A New Discovery of a Very Vast Country, Situated in America, Between New Mexico and the Frozen Ocean," printed in 1698. The first is less in detail, but more reliable than the second. Its account of the building and voyage of the *Griffon*, is, for the most part, a bold plagiarism from the official record of that enterprise, which had been communicated, either by La Salle himself, or through his instrumentality, to the French Minister of the Marine, in 1682. Nearly all of Hennepin's account is a verbatim copy of that record; with here and there a slight variation, occasionally relieved by an original paragraph. Twenty-one out of thirty-two pages of his "Louisiane," relating to the *Griffon*, are copied almost literally from the official document above referred to, now deposited among the *Clair-*

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\* Hennepin, La., p. 15.

† Margry, Découv., vol. ii., p. 230.

‡ Margry, Découv., vol. ii., p. 9; Hennepin, N. D., p. 76.

*ambault* Collections, in the National Library of Paris.\* His narrative requires close scrutiny, especially in those particulars in which he was neither actor nor eye-witness. He belonged to that class of writers, which is said to speak the truth by accident and to lie by inclination. La Salle calls him a great exaggerator, who wrote more in conformity with his wishes than his knowledge.†

The expedition sent forward from Fort Frontenac, was under the immediate charge of the *Sieur de la Motte*; who was accompanied by *Hennepin* and sixteen men. They embarked on the eighteenth of November, 1678, in the brigantine before mentioned.‡

The autumnal gales were then sweeping over the lake, and the cautious navigators, fearing to be driven on the south shore, avoided the usual course, and coasted timidly under shelter of the Canadian headlands. Having advanced as far west as the site of Toronto, they sought refuge from a storm in the mouth of the river Humber. Grounding three times at the entrance, they were forced to throw their ballast overboard and to land fourteen of their crew, before the vessel could be made to float. The inhabitants of an Iroquois village near by, called *Tai-ai-a-gon*, were greatly surprised at their strange visitors, and generously supplied them with provisions in their extremity. The vessel narrowly escaped being frozen in for the winter, and was only released by being cut out with axes.¶

On the fifth of December the wind becoming favorable, they left for the south side of the lake, riding out a boisterous night about twelve miles from the mouth of the Niagara. On the sixth of December, St. Nicholas' day, they entered what *Hennepin* calls "the beautiful river Niagara, into which no bark similar to ours had ever sailed."\*\* Religion and commerce had joined

\* Compare *Hennepin, La.*, pp. 41-73, with *Margry, Découv.*, vol. i., pp. 441-451.

† *Margry, Découv.*, vol. ii., p. 259.

‡ *Hennepin, La.*, p. 20. *Ib.* p. 21.

¶ *Le Clerq, Etab. de la Foi*, vol. ii., p. 141.

\*\* *Hennepin, N. D.*, pp. 74, 75.



in the enterprise. The noble Ambrosian hymn "*Te Deum Laudamus*," arose from the deck of the gallant bark, chanted by the crew in recognition of their escape from the perils of a wintry navigation, and of their safe arrival in so desirable and commodious a harbor. Near by their anchorage were a few cabins, temporarily occupied by the Senecas for shelter during their fishing season. Our voyagers were abundantly supplied by the natives with white-fish, three hundred of which they caught in a single cast of the net. Such unusual luck was ascribed to the auspicious arrival of "the great wooden canoe."\*

A party was now organized for exploring the river above the Falls, in search of a suitable site for building the projected ship. On the seventh of December, Hennepin, with five companions, ascended two leagues in a bark canoe, as far as the Mountain Ridge. Here their progress was arrested by the rapids which rush with impetuous force from the gorge above; and they landed on the Canadian shore. Prosecuting their search on foot, they ascended what are now known as Queenston Heights, and followed the river for three leagues, until they reached the mouth of the Chippewa creek. This stream is described by Hennepin as emptying into the Niagara from the west, a league above the great Fall. Being unable to find any land suitable for their purpose, they encamped for the night, first clearing away a foot of snow, before their fire could be kindled.

On their return the next day, herds of deer and flocks of wild turkeys met them on the way, giving promise of abundant game for the subsistence of the party during their contemplated sojourn on the Niagara.†

On the eleventh of December, they celebrated the first mass ever said in the vicinity.

The next three days were passed at Niagara, the wind being too unfavorable for the bark to ascend the river.

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\* Hennepin, La., p. 23.

† Hennepin, N. D., p. 76.

On the fifteenth, Hennepin took the helm, and with the aid of three men towing on shore, reached the foot of the rapids, and moored the bark to the American shore, below the precipitous cliffs of the Mountain Ridge. They employed the seventeenth and the two following days in constructing a cabin on the site of Lewiston, to serve as a storehouse for the use of the expedition. They were obliged to thaw the frozen ground with boiling water, before the palisades could be driven.

On the twentieth, and the next three days, the ice came down the rapids with such force, and in such quantities, as to threaten the safety of their bark. To guard against the danger, the carpenters, under the direction of La Motte, made a capstan, with which they endeavored to draw the vessel into a ravine; but the strain on the cable broke it three times. They finally passed it around the hull, and succeeded, with ropes attached, in hauling her to a place of safety.\*

A further advance by vessel or canoe having been checked by the rapids, a portage around the Falls must now be made. Hennepin's reconnoissance, as before seen, had proved the one on the Canadian side to be unsuitable. It now remained to explore the other. Before doing so, it became necessary to consult La Salle, who had not yet arrived from Fort Frontenac, and also to conciliate the neighboring Senecas. The preparations made by La Salle to build a fort at the mouth of the Niagara, and a vessel above the Falls, on the territory claimed by the Senecas, had aroused the jealousy of that proud people. Attempts had been made, with some success, to propitiate those residing in the small village on the western bank of the river near its mouth.† It was deemed expedient, however, to send an embassy to their capital beyond the Genesee, before proceeding with the enterprise; and to negotiate, with the usual presents, for the required permission.

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\* Hennepin, N. D., pp. 77, 78. Margry, Découv., vol. ii., p. 8.

† Hennepin, N. D., p. 78.



Hennepin, never idle, was busy in the construction of a bark chapel for Divine service, when La Motte invited him to join in the proposed embassy. As the friar had ingratiated himself with the Iroquois, and possessed some knowledge of their language, his co-operation was deemed important. At first he feigned reluctance to go, but finally consented.\* Leaving a portion of their party at the foot of the Mountain Ridge, La Motte and Hennepin, with four French companions, left on Christmas day, 1678.

Thus, in mid-winter, with blankets, warm clothing and moccasins for protection, they boldly plunged into the depths of the cheerless forest. The distance to the Seneca village was estimated at thirty-two leagues, or about eighty miles. Five hundred pounds of merchandise for Indian presents, and some sacks of parched corn, were distributed among the party. Their provisions were increased on the way by an occasional deer, and a few black squirrels procured by the Indians. For five weary days they followed the Indian trail through the frost-bound wilderness; sleeping at night in the open air, without shelter, except what chance afforded.

On the last day of December, they reached Tagarondies, the great village of the Senecas, situated on what has since been known as Boughton Hill, near Victor, in Ontario county.†

They were received by the Senecas with marked consideration, and conducted to the cabin of their principal chief, where they became objects of curiosity to the women and children. The young men bathed their travel-worn feet, and anointed them with bear's oil. The next day, being the first of the year, Hennepin celebrated mass, and preached the mysteries of his faith to the mixed assembly of French and Indians.

Fathers Julien Garnier and Peter Raffeix, two Jesuit missionaries, were found residing in the village at the time of their visit. The former was the first Jesuit ordained in Can-

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\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 79. Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., p. 443.

† N. Y. His. Collections, second series, vol. ii., p. 160.

ada, and the last missionary of that Order among the Senecas.\* He commenced his labors among the Oneidas in 1668, at the age of twenty-five, and in the same year visited the Onondagas and Cayugas. In 1669 he had charge of the Seneca mission of St. Michael, and the following year that of St. James. In 1671 he conducted the three missions among that people.† He died at Quebec in February, 1730, having devoted upwards of sixty years to his missionary work. He was acquainted with the Algonquin language, but better versed in Huron and Iroquois.‡ His companion, Raffeix, joined him in the Seneca country in 1672. He was chaplain in the expedition of Courcelles against the Mohawks, in 1666.¶ He was soon after chosen for missionary work among the Cayugas, and labored among them and the Senecas until 1680. The writer can find no later notice of him than 1703, at which time he was living at Quebec.\*\*

After Hennepin had concluded his religious services, the grand council was convened. It was composed of forty-two of the elders among the Senecas. Their tall forms were completely enveloped in robes made from the skins of the beaver, wolf and black squirrel. With calumet in mouth, these grave councillors took their seats on their mats, with all the stateliness and dignity of Venetian senators.

At the opening of the council, La Motte, suspecting Father Garnier of hostility to La Salle, objected to his presence. At the request of the Senecas he withdrew. Hennepin, considering this as an affront to his cloth, retired with him. La Salle was ever suspicious of the Jesuits; believing them to be opposed to his enterprises, and inclined to influence the Indians against him.

The council was informed, through Brassart, the interpreter,

\* Shea's Catholic Missions, 294, n.

† Jesuit Relations, Quebec, ed. 1668, p. 17; 1669, p. 12; 1670, pp. 69-78; 1671, p. 20; 1666, p. 9.

‡ Jesuit Rel., ed. 1666, p. 6. Parkman's Jesuits, p. 54.

¶ Ib., ed. 1666, p. 9.

\*\* Shea's Catholic Missions, 294, n.



that the French had come to visit them on the part of Onnon-tio, their governor, and to smoke the calumet on their mats; that the Sieur de la Salle was about to build a great wooden canoe above the Falls, in which to bring merchandise from Europe by a more convenient route than the rapids of the Saint Lawrence; that by this means the French would be able to undersell the English of Boston, and the Dutch of New York.\*

This speech was accompanied with four hundred pounds weight of presents, consisting of hatchets, knives, coats, and a large necklace of blue and white shells. Portions of these were handed over at the end of each proposition. This mode of treating with the Indians by bribing their chiefs, has, unfortunately, continued to the present day.

Among other inducements, La Motte promised to furnish, for the convenience of their whole nation, a gunsmith and blacksmith, to reside at the mouth of the Niagara, for the purpose of mending their guns and hatchets. Several coats and pieces of fine cloth, iron, and European merchandise of great rarity among the Indians, and of the value of four hundred francs, were added, as weighty reasons, to influence them in favor of the French. "The best arguments in the world," says Hennepin, "are not listened to by the natives, unless accompanied with presents."†

On the next day, the Senecas answered the speech of La Motte, sentence by sentence, and responded by presents. As aids to the memory, they used small wooden sticks which the speaker took up, one by one, as he replied, *seratim*, to the several points in the speech of the day previous. Belts of wampum, made of small shells strung on fine sinews, were presented after each speech, followed by the exclamation "*Ni-a-oua*," signifying approval, from the whole assembly. This, however,

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\* Alluding to the plan of La Salle to send merchandise to the Niagara by the way of the Mississippi and the lakes.

† Hennepin, N. D., p. 85.

proved an insincere response in the present instance; for La Motte, with his specious reasoning, made no impression on these shrewd children of the forest. They knew that the English and Dutch had greater facilities than the French for supplying them with merchandise, and could outbid the latter in trading for their furs. They received the offered presents with apparent acquiescence, and after the customary salutations, the council broke up. Before it ended, two prisoners of war, who had been taken near the borders of Virginia, were brought in; one of whom, out of compliment to their guests, was put to death with tortures, such as Indians only in their savage state can invent and inflict. The French, unable to bear the sight, and willing to testify their abhorrence of the cruelty, withdrew from the scene. So the embassy left for their quarters on the banks of the Niagara; which they reached on the fourteenth of January, 1679, thoroughly exhausted with their toilsome expedition. They were in some measure solaced on their arrival, with the abundance of white-fish, just then in season. The water in which they were boiled, thickened into jelly, reminded them of the savory soups to which they had been accustomed in their father-land.\*

The side of the Niagara on which the vessel for use on the Upper Lakes could be most conveniently built, was as yet undetermined. The Canadian side had been examined, as already noticed, and found unsatisfactory.† Historians have widely differed, not only as to the one finally selected, but also as to the precise point where the keel of the historic bark was laid. The solution of these questions involves interesting topographical investigations.

Governor Cass, in his address before the Historical Society of Michigan, maintains that "the *Griffon* was launched at Erie."‡ Schoolcraft says, "near Buffalo."|| Bancroft, in the

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\* Hennepin, N. D. pp., 78-91.

† Hennepin, N. D., p. 75.

‡ Historical Discourse at Detroit, p. 14.

|| Tour to the Lakes, p. 33.



first edition of his History of the United States, says, "at the mouth of the Tonewanda creek."\* Dr. Sparks, in his "Life of La Salle," says, "at Chippewa creek, on the Canadian side of the river;"† and his opinion was followed by Parkman in his Life of Pontiac,‡ and more recently by Doctor Abbott, in his "Adventures of La Salle."|| What is still more remarkable and inexcusable, the new History of the United States, bearing the endorsement of the late William Cullen Bryant, states that the *Griffon* was built at Fort Frontenac, which it locates on Lake Erie! Such is history.

In an article published August 22d, 1845, in the Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*, the writer claimed that the vessel was built at the mouth of the Cayuga creek.

Since that publication, Mr. Bancroft, in later editions of his History,\*\* and Mr. Parkman, in his more recent works,†† have accepted Cayuga creek as the true site of the dock.

As some doubts, however, still exist, and erroneous locations continue to be repeated, the subject has been re-examined in the light of the evidence afforded by the valuable documents lately published by Mr. Margry, under the auspices of the American Congress, and with the aid of other historical material recently discovered.

The portage around the Falls, and the site of the dock, must, necessarily, have been on the same side of the river. The American portage would naturally be chosen as the shortest and most feasible route; its length being two and a half miles less than the Canadian, owing to the configuration of the river.

That the French actually used the American side during and subsequent to the building of the *Griffon*, clearly appears from the testimony of Hennepin and La Hontan.

In his notice of the point where the river issues from the

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\* History of the United States, vol. iii., p. 162.

† Life of La Salle, p. 21.

‡ Parkman's Life of Pontiac, first ed., p. 52.

|| Abbott's Adventures of La Salle, p. 98.

\*\* Vol. iii., p. 162, sixteenth ed.

†† Discovery of the Great West, p. 133. Life of Pontiac, sixth ed., vol. i., p. 58.

mountain gorge between Lewiston and Queenston, Hennepin mentions a "great rock" which rose to a considerable height above the water, "three fathoms from the Canadian shore." Also, "three mountains" on the American side, "opposite the great rock."\* In describing his return from his western discoveries, after the loss of the *Griffon*, Hennepin says, "we carried our canoe from the great Fall of Niagara to the foot of the three mountains, which are two leagues below, and opposite the great rock."† This locates the portage used by Hennepin, on the American side.

The Baron la Hontan, who visited the Falls in 1688, only nine years after the *Griffon* was built, says, in his "Voyages to North America," published in 1703, "I went up the Niagara three leagues from its mouth, to the end of navigation. We were obliged to carry our canoe from a league and a half below the Falls, to a half a league above them. We ascended the three mountains before finding the way smooth and level."‡ On the map which accompanies his travels, La Hontan places the "three mountains" unmistakably on the American side of the river, just south of the site of Lewiston.

From the preceding quotations, it is evident that the "great rock," is referred to as on the west or Canadian side, and the "three mountains" on the opposite or American side of the Niagara.

This "great rock" was long a conspicuous object near the shore; and can still be seen under the western end of the old Suspension bridge, the ruins of which now span the river at that point. Within the memory of the early settlers, boats could readily pass between the rock and the adjacent bank. The debris from the precipice above, thrown down in the construction of the bridge, has nearly filled the intervening space. Hennepin describes the rock as very high;|| but time, and the

\* Hennepin, N. D., pp. 45, 77, 113, 452.

† Hennepin, N. D., p. 456.

‡ La Hontan's Voyages, Eng. ed., vol. i., p. 81.

|| Hennepin, N. D., p. 452.



action of the ever-flowing current, have reduced its dimensions, and settled it in its river bed. It still lifts its dark head above the surrounding waters, an abiding witness of the accuracy of this part of the Franciscan's narrative, and perpetuates his memory under the name of "Hennepin's Rock."

The "three mountains" on the American side can easily be recognized in the lofty ridge, composed of three terraces, caused by the geological formation of the bank, which rises four hundred feet above the surface of the river. The ravine into which the brigantine was drawn by La Motte, to protect it from the ice, as before stated, is plainly to be seen near the foot of the Mountain Ridge, on the American side of the river, a short distance above Lewiston. This ravine, in the absence of any on the Canadian side, proves the site of the palisaded storehouse, and the commencement of the portage, to have been on the eastern side.

The proofs establishing the particular *site* where the vessel was built, will now be considered. Hennepin describes the portage as passing over beautiful meadows, and through groves of scattered oaks and pine. "We went," says he, "two leagues above the great Fall of Niagara, and there built some stocks for the construction of the vessel needed for our voyage. We could not have chosen a more convenient place. It was near a river which empties into the strait between Lake Erie and the great Fall."\*

Two leagues above the Falls would be about five miles. At that distance we find the Cayuga creek, a stream which answers perfectly to Hennepin's description. Opposite its mouth, an island of the same name lies parallel with the shore, about a mile long, and two or three hundred yards wide. It is separated from the main-land by a narrow branch of the river, called by the early inhabitants, "Little Niagara;" wide and deep enough to float a vessel of the tonnage of the *Griffon*.

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\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 94.

Into this channel and opposite the middle of the island, the Cayuga creek empties. On the main shore, just above the mouth of the creek, and under shelter of the island, is a favorable site for a ship-yard. So eligible is the position, that it was selected by the United States government, in the early part of the present century, as a suitable point for building one or more vessels for the transportation of troops and supplies to the western posts. For that reason it was known in early times, as the "old ship-yard;" and local traditions have been preserved in the memory of the early pioneers, of its anterior occupancy, for the same purpose, by the French.\*

Investigation among the archives of the *Ministère de la Marine* in Paris, have brought to light the existence of three manuscript maps, nearly cotemporaneous with the construction of the *Griffon*. The first two were made by *Jean Baptiste Louis Franquelin*, Hydrographer to Louis XIV., and the predecessor of Louis Jolliet in that office.

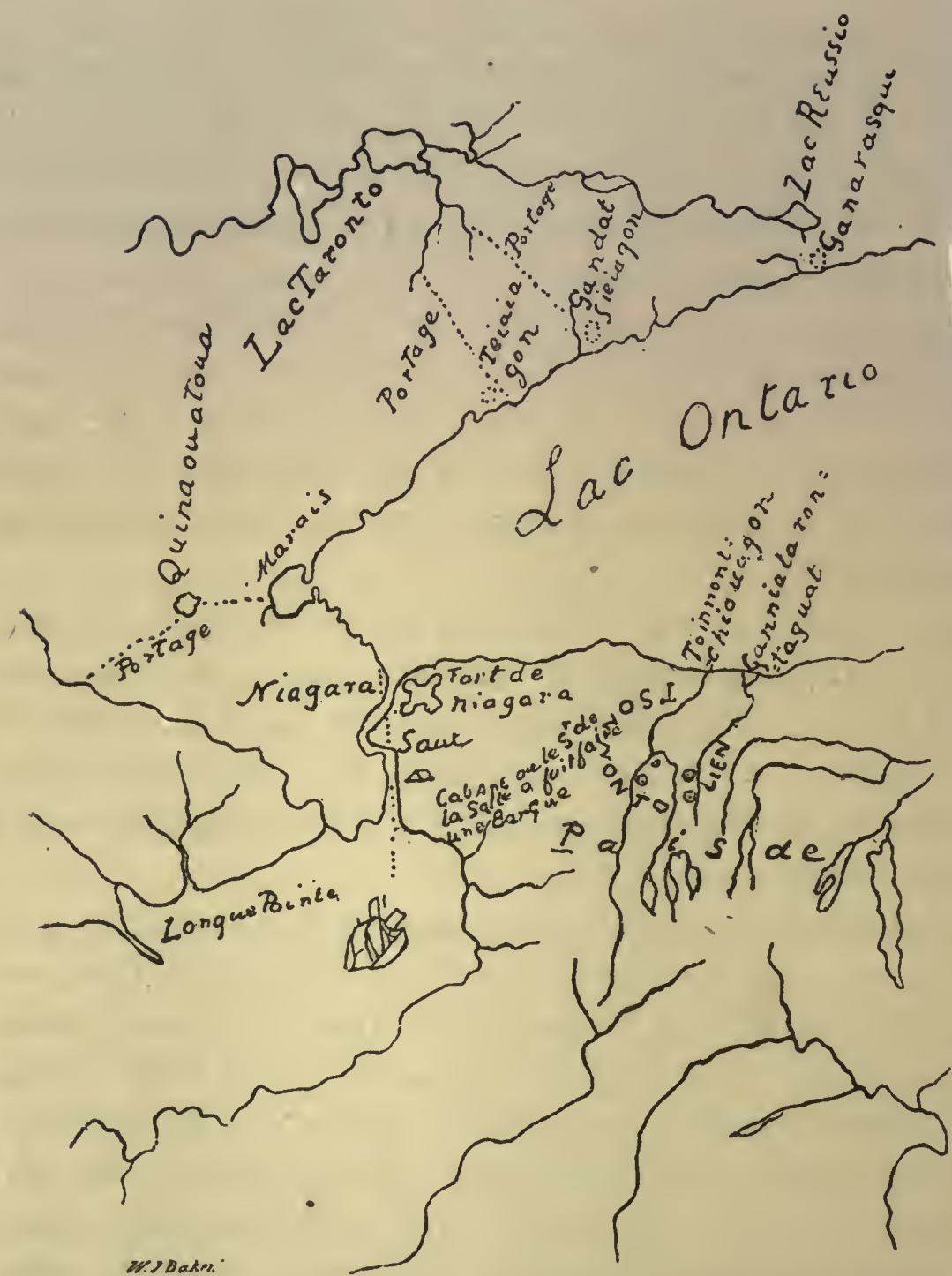
The earliest of the three is a map of North America, purporting to have been "drawn in 1688, by order of the Governor and Intendant of New France, from sixteen years observations of the author." It is five feet long, and three feet wide. Lakes Ontario and Erie, with the adjacent country, are, for that early day, remarkably well delineated. The Niagara river and Falls are distinctly represented, with a portage road around the latter, on the American side. A fac-simile of that portion of the map which embraces the Niagara river, reproduced from a careful tracing over the original, is given on the following page.

Its most interesting feature is the design of a cabin, on the eastern side of the river, midway between the two lakes, with this inscription: "*Cabane ou le Sr de la Salle a fait faire une barque.*" (Cabin where the Sieur de la Salle caused a bark to be built.)

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\* Marshall's Niagara Frontier, p. 30.





The next map drawn by the same author in 1689, is substantially like that of 1688. The Niagara river is laid down as on the former chart, with a cabin indicating the site where the *Griffon* was built; but the inscription differs slightly, it being, "*Chantier ou le Sr de la Salle a f<sup>t</sup> fr<sup>e</sup> une barque.*" (Stocks where the Sieur de la Salle caused a bark to be built.)

The third map, drawn after Franquelin in 1699, has, unfortunately, been so closely trimmed for binding in atlas form, as

partly to cut off the Niagara river; but the inscription, indicating, as on the other maps, that the vessel was constructed on the eastern side of the river, was left untouched, and is as follows: "*Chantier de Sr de la Salle pour sa barq.*" (Stocks for the bark of the Sieur de la Salle.)

This dock was referred to by the Marquis Denonville in a *procès-verbal*, or act of taking possession of the territory of the Senecas in 1687; only eight years after the *Griffon* was built. He says: "La Salle built a bark two leagues above the great Fall of Niagara, which navigated Lakes Erie, Huron and Illinois (Michigan), *the stocks of which are still to be seen.*"\* It will be noticed that Hennepin and Denonville agree in the distance of the dock above the Falls.

The proofs now exhibited remove all doubts as to the site where the *Griffon* was built. The mouth of the Cayuga creek is, unquestionably, the true locality. In commemoration of the event, the name, "La Salle," has appropriately been conferred on the neighboring village.

La Salle, who had remained at Fort Frontenac, for the purpose of procuring supplies and materials for the proposed vessel, embarked with his lieutenant, Tonty, on a brigantine of twenty tons, and sailed for Niagara, by the south shore of the lake.† When near the mouth of the Genesee river, he landed by canoe, and went to Tagarondies, which he had visited with the Sulpitians, Dollier and Gallinée, ten years before.‡ At a council, supplementary to the one just held by La Motte and Hennepin, he succeeded, by his personal address, in gaining what they had failed to obtain—the full assent of the Senecas to the execution of his enterprises.¶

Re-embarking in his vessel, he sailed westward toward Niagara. When about twenty-five miles east of that river—the wind having failed—he left the vessel, and, accompanied by

\* N. Y. Col. Doc., vol. ix., p. 335.

† Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 575.

‡ Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 127.

¶ Hennepin, N. D., p. 111.



Tonty, pursued his way to Niagara by land. He left instructions with the pilot, that if the wind should blow from the northwest, he should steer for Niagara; and if from the southwest, he should seek shelter in the river of the Senecas.\*

On the eighth of January, 1679, the pilot and crew, while waiting for a favorable breeze, left the vessel at anchor, to sleep on shore. The wind rose so suddenly, that they were unable to embark. The vessel dragged her anchor, struck on a rock, and became a total wreck.† This must have been at or near what is now known as Thirty-mile Point, being that distance east of Fort Niagara. By this misfortune, a large amount of material, designed for the construction of the *Griffon*, including several bark canoes, was lost. Nothing was saved but the anchors and cables. To replace the loss, much valuable time would now be required, in transporting provisions and supplies for the use of the men employed in the work.‡

La Salle and Tonty reached the mouth of the Niagara on the evening after they had left the vessel. The Indians residing on the western side of the river, answering their summons, ferried them over to the village in their wooden canoes, and hospitably received them into their cabins.¶ Nothing could be had for their refreshment, but the usual Indian diet of white-fish and corn soup. This seemed, to Tonty's palate, barbarous and unsavory. Nevertheless, hunger compelled him to partake of it, without the relish of bread, wine, pepper or salt. Such was the rough life of the French explorer; subsisting on game, fish, and Indian corn, and inadequately protected from the weather by rudely constructed cabins of bark.

At midnight, the restless La Salle set out by moonlight with Tonty, expecting to join La Motte in his cabin at the foot of the Mountain Ridge. They found he was still absent with

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\* Genesee river.

† Margry Découv., vol. i., pp. 442, 576.

‡ Margry, Découv., vol. ii., p. 229. Hennepin, La., p. 41.

¶ Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 576.

Hennepin, on their embassy to the Senecas. Leaving Tonty to await his return, La Salle proceeded the next day further up the river, in search of a site above the Falls, convenient for building the projected vessel. Having found one, he transferred to the location some of his men, for the purpose of constructing a dock, and beginning the work. Returning to Niagara, he waited impatiently for the arrival of La Motte and Hennepin. News reached him while there of the loss of his vessel on Lake Ontario; and he repaired at once to the wreck, in order to rescue what might be useful in the construction of the new bark.

On the twenty-second of January, La Salle, Hennepin and Tonty repaired to the site which the former had chosen for the dock.\* On his way there, La Salle turned aside to view the great Cataract; the first engraved view and detailed description of which are given by his companion, Hennepin, in his "New Discovery." La Salle had passed within fifteen miles of it ten years before, as he was coasting by canoe along the southerly shore of Lake Ontario, but this was his first visit.†

Tonty was now given the command of the working party. A place was cleared for the stocks. The woods resounded with the strokes of the axe, that pioneer of western civilization. Oaks were felled, and converted into plank; and their branches fashioned into ribs and knees, to conform the ship to a shapely model.

On the twenty-sixth, the keel was laid; and everything being ready, La Salle sent the carpenter to invite Hennepin to strike the first blow for the commerce of the lakes. The modesty of the good father for once overcame his ambition, and he declined the proffered honor. La Salle then promised ten Louis d'or, to encourage the carpenter to hasten the work.‡

It now became necessary for La Salle to return to Fort

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\* Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., pp. 576, 577. Hennepin, N. D., p. 96.

† Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., p. 139.

‡ Hennepin, N. D., p. 95.



Frontenac, to obtain supplies for his proposed ship, and to appease the clamors of his importunate creditors. It was about the first of February, and the snow still lay deep in the leafless woods. His bark had been wrecked, and the lake was too treacherous for a wintry voyage by canoe or brigantine. Nothing, however, could repress his untiring energy. Setting out on snow-shoes, with only two men for his companions, and a dog to draw his baggage, he traversed the frozen route of over eighty leagues, to Fort Frontenac. He took no provisions but a bag of parched corn, and even that failed him before he reached his destination.\* Hennepin and Tonty accompanied him as far as Niagara. While there, La Salle traced a fort, which, after the prince of that name, he called Fort Conty. In order to deceive the Senecas, he pretended it was for a building he had promised them for the blacksmith.

La Motte lost no time in commencing a house on the site, and fortifying it with palisades, for the protection of the party and the storage of their supplies.† Thus were laid the foundations of that renowned fortress, over which, after passing successively under French and English control, now floats the standard of the American Republic.

After La Salle's departure, Tonty and Hennepin returned to their duties at the ship-yard.‡ Two bark cabins, including a chapel for the special use of Hennepin, were built with the aid of the Indians. Divine worship was regularly observed; and on Sundays and fete days, the sombre woods were vocal with the Gregorian chants, sung by the devout Franciscans.

Fortunately they were not interrupted by the Senecas; most of their warriors being absent on an expedition beyond Lake Erie. The few that remained were less insolent through their weakness. However, they often visited the camp, and exhibited dissatisfaction at the progress of the work.

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\* Margry, *Découv.*, vol. 1., pp. 442, 577. Hennepin, N. D. p. 97.

† Hennepin, *La.*, p. 30.

‡ Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., 577.

One of them, feigning intoxication, attempted to kill La Forge, the blacksmith, who vigorously repulsed him with a hissing bar of red-hot iron. This, added to a reprimand from Hennepin, caused him to desist. The timely warning of a squaw, holding friendly relations with one of the workmen, prevented the destruction of the vessel; the Senecas having planned to burn it on the stocks. Only the strictest vigilance saved it from the torch.\* So great was Tonty's fear that an attack would be made upon the camp, that he sent La Motte on a second visit to the Seneca village, to avert the design. He was not only successful in his mission, but secured, at the same time, much needed supplies of corn for Fort Frontenac, and for the party at work on the *Griffon*.†

While La Motte was absent on his mission, Tonty repaired to Niagara, and launched the brigantine, in order to save what he could from the unfortunate wreck. But a storm arose, and the wind and ice forced him to come to anchor. The cable parted, and, after encountering great peril and fatigue, he succeeded in reaching the mouth of the Niagara, without accomplishing his object. After the storm had subsided, he embarked, by canoe, to regain his lost anchor; and met La Motte on his return from the Senecas. Leaving the latter to fish up the anchor, Tonty returned to the dock.‡

The frequent alarms which they experienced, the fear that provisions would fail them by reason of the loss of the bark, and the refusal of the Senecas to sell them supplies, greatly discouraged the carpenters.¶ They were otherwise demoralized by the attempted desertion of one of their number to the Dutch in New York. Hennepin assumes the credit of allaying these fears, and of stimulating the men to greater diligence, by his timely exhortations on Sundays and festivals, and assurances that their work would redound to the glory of God, and the

\* Margry, vol. i., p. 443. Hennepin, N. D., p. 97.

† Margry, vol. i., p. 578. Ib., vol. ii., p. 8.

‡ Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 577.

¶ Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 444.



welfare of the Christian colonies.\* He made frequent trips to Niagara, carrying his portable chapel strapped to his shoulders; equally ready to discharge the functions of his holy calling, or to aid in the temporal work which La Salle had undertaken. The Senecas called him *Hochitagon*, signifying *bare-feet*, in allusion to the custom of his Order in wearing sandals.†

Two Indians, employed as hunters, supplied the party with venison and other game.‡ The work went on, and the winter wore away, without remarkable incident. Spring succeeded, and in the month of May the vessel was nearly ready for launching. Its formidable hull, looming up on the stocks, continued to excite the jealousy of the Senecas, and they again threatened to burn it. Fearing this, it was deemed advisable to launch it at once.¶ This was done with due formalities. A blessing was invoked according to the usage of the Roman Church—a salute was fired—the *Te Deum* was chanted, and the vessel safely floated in the Cayuga channel of the Niagara. She was named “LE GRIFFON,” in compliment to Count Frontenac, on whose escutcheon two winged griffins were emblazoned as supporters. The Frenchmen cheered as the vessel entered the stream, and swung securely at her anchor. A party of stoical Iroquois, who were returning from the chase, could not repress their astonishment at the unusual spectacle. The skill of the Frenchmen, able to build such a moving fort, in so short a time, excited their admiration, and they called them *Ot-kon*, signifying, according to Hennepin, *penetrating minds*.\*\* The Senecas willingly joined in celebrating the launch, freely partaking the brandy which was liberally distributed on the joyful occasion.

The overworked Frenchmen, released from their toil, and

\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 98.

† Hennepin, N. D., p. 27.

‡ Hennepin, N. D., pp. 95, 98.

¶ Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 444.

\*\* Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 444. *Ot-kon* is a Mohawk word, taken by Hennepin from Bruyas' Dictionary of that language. The corresponding word in Seneca is *Ot-goh*, and signifies supernatural beings or spirits. Bruyas' Mohawk Dictionary, p. 120.

relieved from their painful vigils, gladly exchanged their cheerless quarters on land, for the deck of the *Griffon*, where they swung their hammocks; secure, for the first time, from the jealous owners of the soil.\*

While these events were transpiring under the supervision of Tonty, La Salle, whose duties detained him at Fort Frontenac, was harrassed by his creditors, clamorous for the payment of their dues. All his effects at Montreal and Quebec were attached, even to the bed of his secretary; notwithstanding his interest in Fort Frontenac, alone, was ample security for all his debts, without relying upon returns from his western venture. These hostile proceedings originated, in part, from jealousy of the man. They did not, however, modify his purpose, but stimulated him to prosecute his enterprise, regardless of the machinations of his enemies.†

The *Griffon* being safely moored in the river, and the time approaching for the commencement of her western voyage, Hennepin, in order to ascertain the feasibility of taking her up the Niagara into Lake Erie, was dispatched on a reconnoissance. Accompanied by a single Indian in a bark canoe, he twice poled up the rapids, as far as the lake; sounding their depth, and estimating their force. He reported that no difficulty existed in the undertaking, if the *Griffon* should be favored with a fresh north or northwest breeze.‡

Soon after the vessel was completed, she sailed up the eastern side of Grand Island, overcoming the current with her sails alone. She dropped anchor below Squaw Island, in ten feet water, two and a half miles from the lake, where she could ride secure in any weather.¶

Hennepin now repaired to Fort Frontenac for the purpose of obtaining, from his brethren there, some companions to aid him in his proposed mission to the great West. Leaving the

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\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 100. Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 444.

† Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 444. Hennepin, N. D., pp. 101, 102.

‡ Hennepin, N. D., p. 102.

¶ Hennepin, N. D., p. 103.



*Griffon* at her anchorage, he descended the river by canoe, with two assistants, as far as the landing just above the Falls. From thence they carried their canoe over the portage; and launching it again at the foot of the Mountain Ridge, proceeded to Lake Ontario. Here they found the brigantine which the Sieur de la Forest had brought from Fort Frontenac. After spending a few days at the mouth of the river in trading with the Indians, they sailed for the Fort. The sea-sickness of a party of squaws, who embarked with them to save a journey of forty leagues, by land, to their village, rendered the voyage quite disagreeable, particularly to Father Hennepin, who emphatically expresses himself quite disgusted with his fellow voyagers.\*

After touching at the mouth of the Oswego river, where they traded with the Iroquois, exchanging brandy for furs (a proceeding strongly condemned by Hennepin), they crossed the lake and landed on Gull Island, called by Hennepin "*Goilans*," one of the group which lies off Point Traverse in the eastern end of Lake Ontario. This island was so named from the gulls that frequented it in great abundance. They deposited their eggs in the sand, and left them to be hatched by the sun. Hennepin states that he "gathered and carried away a large quantity, which relished well in omelette."†

On arriving at Fort Frontenac, Hennepin was welcomed by his Franciscan brethren. Two of the Order, Gabriel de la Ribourde and Zenobe Membre, were chosen to accompany him in the memorable voyage of the *Griffon*.‡

On the twenty-seventh of May, while the party were at Fort Frontenac, La Salle, in recognition of the services of the Franciscans, conveyed to the Order eighteen acres of land bordering on the lake near the Fort, and about one hundred in the adjacent forest. He also decreed, by virtue of his

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\* Hennepin, N. D., pp. 104, 105.

† Hennepin, N. D., p. 106.

‡ Hennepin, N. D., p. 107.

authority as governor and proprietor of the Fort, that no other Order should be established in its vicinity.

After visiting the neighboring Indians, the Franciscans embarked in the brigantine, for Niagara.\* They landed first at the mouth of the Genesee river, where they traded with the Senecas; purchasing furs and supplies, with guns, knives, powder, lead and brandy; the latter being the most in demand. Hennepin secluded himself from these distractions, by retiring some distance in the woods; where he built a bark chapel for religious observances. While they were thus delayed, La Salle arrived at the end of eight days, on his way to the Seneca village. On reaching the latter, he made some presents to attach the Indians to his interest, and to counteract the prejudices which his enemies had secretly excited against him. These negotiations detained them so long, as to prevent their reaching Niagara before the thirtieth of June.

On the fourth of July,† Hennepin and Sergeant la Fleur set out on foot to rejoin the *Griffon*. They visited the great Cataract on their way, and stopped at the stocks where the vessel had been built, and which Hennepin locates at six leagues from Lake Ontario. While resting there, two young Indians seriously incommoded the fathers, by slyly appropriating all their provisions. Here they found an old bark canoe, much dilapidated, which they repaired as well as their conveniences allowed. In this, with extemporized paddles, they risked the voyage up the Niagara, and were cordially welcomed on board the *Griffon*, still swinging at her anchors, in the current below the rapids.‡ A party of Iroquois, returning with prisoners from a western foray, visited the ship on their way, and were struck with amazement that the material for her equipment, including such large anchors, could have been brought up the rapids of the St. Lawrence. “*Gannoron!*” they exclaimed, in

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\* Hennepin, N. D., pp. 108, 109, 110.

† Hennepin's N. D., p. 111. There is some confusion of dates in Hennepin's narrative, not reconcilable.

‡ Hennepin, N. D., p. 112.



their astonishment; an expression in their language for, "Wonderful."\* Leaving instructions with the pilot, not to attempt the ascent of the river, Hennepin returned to Niagara on the sixteenth, and brought up the brigantine in which they had come from Fort Frontenac, as far as the Great Rock; and anchored her at the foot of the Three Mountains.†

The munitions of war, provisions and rigging with which the brigantine was loaded, were now carried over the portage by the crew, aided by the Franciscans, involving many a weary and painful journey of two long leagues. Father Gabriel, sixty-four years old, went up and down the Three Mountains, three several times, with remarkable activity and endurance. It required four persons to carry the largest anchor; but a liberal distribution of brandy encouraged the men, and lightened their labor.‡

The transportation of their effects being thus accomplished, all repaired to the outlet of Lake Erie, and waited for the sailing of the *Griffon*. Hennepin took advantage of the delay, to make another visit to the Falls, in company with La Salle and Father Gabriel.§ He was so charmed with the fine scenery, the abundant fishery, and the beauty of the river, that he proposed to La Salle to found a settlement on its borders. By this means, he claimed, the Indian trade could be monopolized, and at the same time the interests of religion be promoted.\*\*

But La Salle was in debt; depending for the liquidation of his liabilities on the furs he expected to realize from the far West. This consideration, coupled with an intense desire to explore the interior of the continent, prevented his listening to the entreaties of Hennepin.

Everything being ready for the voyage, several fruitless at-

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\* This is not a Seneca, but a Mohawk word. It was evidently borrowed by Hennepin from Father Bruyas' manuscript Dictionary of the Mohawk Language, which the former consulted in America. The corresponding word in the Seneca dialect, is *Ga-nó-oh*, which signifies literally, *difficult* or *extraordinary*. Bruyas' Radical Words of the Mohawk Language, p. 83.

† Hennepin, N. D., p. 113.

‡ Hennepin, N. D., p. 114.

§ Hennepin, N. D., p. 116.

\*\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 105.

tempts were made by the *Griffon* to ascend the rapids into Lake Erie. The winds were either adverse, or too light. While thus waiting, a part of the crew cleared some land on the Canadian shore, and sowed several varieties of garden seeds. "This," says Hennepin, "was done for the benefit of those who should be engaged in maintaining, over the portage, the communication between the vessels navigating the two lakes."\* They discovered some wild *chervil*, and quantities of Spanish garlic, (*roscambole*) growing there spontaneously.†

The crew had been reduced, by leaving Father Melithon and others at the stocks above the Falls. A portion of the remainder encamped on shore, to lighten the vessel in its attempts to stem the rapid current. Divine service was daily observed on board, and the preaching on Sundays and festivals could easily be heard by the men on shore.‡

On the twenty-second of July, Tonty was sent forward with five men, to join a company of fourteen, who had, some time before, been ordered by La Salle to rendezvous at the mouth of the Detroit river.¶

At length the wished-for wind from the northeast arose; and the party, to the number of thirty-two souls, including the two Recollects who had recently joined them from Fort Frontenac, embarked; and, contrary to the predictions of the pilot, succeeded in ascending the rapids into the lake,\*\* as heretofore described.

It was a moment of rejoicing and profound gratitude, religiously acknowledged by the happy voyagers, as the vessel floated on the bosom of what Hennepin styles, "the beautiful Lake Erie."

She now spread her sails to the auspicious breeze, and commenced her adventurous voyage. The vast inland seas

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\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 118.

† Judge Clinton says, that the *chervil* was probably the sweet cicely, and the *roscambole* either the leek or garlic.

‡ Hennepin, N. D., p. 119.

¶ Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., p. 578.

\*\* Margry, vol. i., p. 445.



over which she was about to navigate, had never been explored, save by the canoe of the Indian, timidly coasting along their shores. Without chart to warn of hidden dangers, she boldly ploughed her way,—the humble pioneer of the vast fleets of our modern lake commerce.

A moonless night succeeded. They had been told that Lake Erie was full of shoals, fatal to navigation; so they cautiously felt their way, sounding as they went.\*

A thick fog now settled on the lake. Suddenly, the sound of breakers was borne to the ears of the watchful crew, on the dark and murky night. All but La Salle were sure it was the noise of the waves, occasioned by a change of wind. But La Salle had seen the rude chart of Gallinée, made ten years before, containing a rough outline of the northern shore; showing Long Point, advancing southeastward across the pathway of the *Griffon*. Suspecting they were approaching this danger, he ordered the pilot to change the course to east-northeast. They proceeded in that direction, under a light breeze, for two or three hours; hearing the same noise, and sounding constantly, without finding bottom. An hour later, the depth suddenly diminished to three fathoms. All hands were aroused, and the course changed. At length the fog lifted, and Long Point lay directly before them. La Salle's conjectures proved correct. His caution and vigilance had saved his bark from probable wreck.† On the next day, they doubled the dangerous headland, which they named Saint Francis;‡ now known as Long Point.

At sunset, they had already sailed forty-five leagues from the outlet of the lake. After another anxious night, they reached the widest part of the lake; from the shores of which, on either hand, stretched interminable forests, unbroken by the faintest sign of civilization. Westward the course of Empire was now

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\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 121.

† Margry, Découv., vol. ii., p. 230.

‡ Hennepin, N. D., p. 122.

taking its way, under the flag of France, gallantly borne by her adventurous explorers, of which the projector and builder of the *Griffon* was the chief.

France was thus laying the foundations of her dominion over Canada, the Northwest and Louisiana; soon to be wrested from her by the more powerful grasp of England—the latter, in her turn, compelled to yield the fairest portion of her conquest to her rebellious colonies.

On the ninth, the winds being favorable, and the lake smooth, *Pointe au Pins* and *Pointe Pellée* were doubled, on the right; and on the tenth, early in the morning, passing between *Pointe Pellée* and the Bass Islands, they reached the mouth of the Detroit river.\*

Here they found Tonty and his men, waiting for the ship. They had encamped on a narrow beach at the mouth of the strait, with the river in front and a marsh in the rear. A fresh northeast wind had, during the night, so suddenly raised the water at that end of the lake, that it surprised and threatened to overwhelm them, in their slumbers. At break of day, the *Griffon* appeared—a welcome sight. They signaled her with three columns of smoke. She came to anchor at the summons, and received them on board.

On the eleventh, she entered the river and sailed up between *Grosse Isle* and *Bois Black* islands. Hennepin was even more impressed with the beautiful scenery of this river, than by that of the Niagara. Following the official account, he describes the strait as thirty leagues long; bordered by low and level banks, and navigable throughout its entire length. That on either hand were vast prairies, extending back to hills covered with vines, fruit trees, thickets and tall forests, so distributed as to seem rather the work of art, than of nature. All kinds of game abounded, including many species new to the travelers. The awnings which covered the deck of the *Griffon*, were gar-

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\* Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., p. 445. Hennepin, N. D., 122.

† Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., p. 579.



nished with carcasses of deer, killed by the crew. Abundance of all kinds of timber, suitable for building purposes, was growing on shore; also fruit-bearing trees, including the walnut, the chestnut, plum and apple; together with wild vines, loaded with grapes, from which they made a little wine. "The inhabitants," says Hennepin, "who will have the good fortune, some day, to settle on this pleasant and fertile strait, will bless the memory of those who pioneered the way, and crossed Lake Erie by more than a hundred leagues of an untried navigation."\*

Hennepin had failed to induce La Salle to found a colony on the banks of the Niagara. He now set forth the superior merits of the Detroit river for such an establishment, pressing its commercial advantages; while his real object, as avowed in his narrative, was to advance the interests of religion, under cover of secular considerations.† But he made no impression on the fixed purposes of La Salle, who resolutely pursued his way in the *Griffon*, intent on the accomplishment of the great enterprise he had inaugurated.

On the tenth of August, the festival of *Sainte Clare*, they entered and crossed the lake, which they named after that martyred saint. In attempting to pass from the lake into the river above, they encountered the same obstacles, which, after the lapse of two centuries, confront the mariners of the present day. It is a reproach to the enterprise of two powerful commercial nations, that they should suffer such a barrier to exist, for a single season, in the great highway between the East and the West. In describing it, Hennepin says: "We found the mouth of the St. Clair river divided into many narrow channels, full of sand-bars and shoals. After carefully sounding them all, we discovered a very fine one, two or three fathoms deep, and almost a league wide, throughout its entire length."‡

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\* Hennepin, N. D., 124. Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., p. 445.

† Hennepin, N. D., p. 105.

‡ Hennepin, N. D., p. 128. Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., p. 446. The figures in the text are greatly exaggerated. Neither of the channels through the St. Clair flats, are over half a mile wide, and their average depth is less than ten feet.

Contrary winds delayed their progress through the St. Clair river for several days. At length they were enabled to approach Lake Huron; but the violent current, increased by a northerly gale, prevented their advancing. The wind shifting to the south, they succeeded, with the aid of a dozen men towing on shore, as at the outlet of Lake Erie, in surmounting the rapids, which were pronounced by Hennepin almost as strong as those of the Niagara. They entered the lake on the twenty-third of August; the Franciscans chanting the *Te Deum* for the third time, and thanking the Almighty for their safe navigation thus far, and for the sight of the great bay of Lake Huron; on the eastern shores of which their brethren had established the earliest missions in North America, sixty-four years before.\*

As soon as they entered the lake, a fresh wind drove them rapidly along its eastern shore until evening, when it changed violently to the southwest. The *Griffon* then tacked to the northwest, and, running on that course all night, crossed the great bay of "*Sakinam*" (Saginaw), thirty miles in width, and which penetrates twice that distance into the heart of the Michigan Peninsula. When morning came, they were running in sight of land, on a northwesterly course, parallel with the western coast. This continued until evening, when they were becalmed in two fathoms water, among the Thunder Bay Islands. They sought, under easy sail, for an anchorage, during a part of the next night; but, finding none satisfactory, and the wind increasing from the west, they steered north to gain an offing, sounding their way and waiting for the day. La Salle, having discovered evidences of negligence on the part of the pilot, took personal supervision of the lead during the remainder of the voyage.†

On the twenty-fifth, they were becalmed until noon; when, favored by a southerly wind, they steered northwest. Suddenly, the wind veered to the southwest. At midnight, they changed their course to the north, to avoid a cape, since known as Presque

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\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 129.

† Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 447. Hennepin, N. D., p. 131.



Isle, which projected into the lake. Hardly had they doubled this, when a furious gale compelled them to beat to windward under main and foresail, and then to lie to until morning.\*

On the twenty-sixth, the violence of the gale obliged them to send down their topmasts, to lash their yards to the deck, and drift at the mercy of the storm. At noon, the waves ran so high and the lake became so rough, as to compel them to stand in for the land.†

At this juncture, as related by Hennepin, La Salle entered the cabin in much alarm, exclaiming that he commended his enterprise to the Divine protection. "We had been accustomed," says Hennepin, "during the entire voyage, to fall on our knees morning and evening, to say our prayers publicly, and sing some hymns of the church. But the storm was now so violent, that we could not remain on deck. In this extremity, each one performed his devotions independently, as well as he could, except our pilot, who could never be persuaded to follow our example. He complained that the *Sieur de la Salle* had brought him thus far, to lose, in a fresh-water lake, the glory he had acquired in many successful voyages by sea."‡

In this fearful crisis, La Salle was induced, by the importunity of the Recollects, to make a special vow; and, taking Saint Anthony de Padua, the tutelary saint of the sailor, for his patron, he promised, that if God would deliver them from their present peril, the first chapel erected in Louisiana should be dedicated to the memory of that venerated saint. The vow seems to have met a response, for the wind slightly decreased. They were obliged, however, to lie to, drifting slowly all night, unable to find either anchorage or shelter.

On the twenty-seventh, they were driven northwesterly until evening; when, under favor of a light southerly breeze, they rounded Point St. Ignace, and anchored in the calm waters

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\* Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., p. 447.

† Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., p. 447.

‡ Hennepin, *N. D.*, p. 132.

of the bay of Missillimackinac, described as a sheltered harbor, protected on all sides, except from the southeast.\* Here our voyagers found a settlement, composed of Hurons (*Kiskakons*), Ottawas, and a few Frenchmen. A bark-covered chapel bore the emblem of the cross, erected over a mission planted by the Jesuits. Like a dim taper, it shone, with feeble light, in a vast wilderness of pagan darkness. Here it was that Marquette and Jolliet, priest and layman, organized, six years before, their memorable voyage down the Mississippi; and here the bones of the honored missionary found a grave, until rifled by some sacrilegious relic hunter. A few fragments that were spared, have been gathered and preserved with pious care, soon to be deposited under a monument, which will be visible far and wide, over land and water; and show, to coming generations, where the thrice-buried remains of the heroic Marquette have found a final resting place.

The safe arrival of the *Griffon* in this secure haven, was the occasion of great rejoicing to the weary voyagers. A salute was fired from her deck, and thrice responded to by the firearms of the Hurons on shore. Mass was gratefully celebrated by the Franciscans, in the chapel of the Ottawas. La Salle attended, robed in fine clothes, including a scarlet cloak bordered with gold lace; his arms being laid aside in the chapel, in charge of a sentinel. In the distance, the *Griffon* lay at anchor; presenting, with her fine equipment, an imposing appearance. More than a hundred bark canoes gathered around her, attracted by the novel spectacle.†

La Salle found, at Missillimackinac, a part of the fifteen men that he had sent forward from Fort Frontenac to trade with the Illinois Indians, and whom he supposed were already among the latter. They had listened to reports on the way, that the plans of La Salle were visionary, and that the *Griffon* would never reach Missillimackinac. La Salle seized four of the de-

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\* Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., p. 447.

† Hennepin, *N. D.*, p. 135. Margry, *Découv.*, vol. i., pp. 449, 579.



serters; and, learning that two more were at the Saut Sainte Marie, he despatched Tonty on the twenty-ninth of September, with six assistants, to arrest them.

As the season was rapidly passing away, he was unable to wait for Tonty's return, and gave orders for the departure of the *Griffon*. On the twelfth of September, five days before Tonty's return, she sailed out of the straits, into Lake Michigan, then named Illinois.\* A prosperous run brought her to an island since called Washington Island, forty leagues from Missillimackinac, inhabited by the Pottawatamies. It is situated at the entrance of *La Grand Baie*, a name since corrupted into Green Bay. Some of the party were found there, who had been sent forward by La Salle to the Illinois, the year previous. They had collected a large quantity of furs, to the amount of 12,000 pounds, in anticipation of the arrival of the *Griffon*. Our navigators found secure shelter in a small bay, now known as Detroit harbor, on the southerly side of the island, where they rode out, at anchor, a violent storm of four days duration.†

As winter was now approaching, La Salle loaded the *Griffon* with the furs which had thus been collected; intending to send them to the storehouse he had built above the Falls; from thence to be transhipped to Fort Frontenac, in satisfaction of the claims of his creditors. His own purpose was to pursue his route, by canoe, to the head of Lake Michigan; and from thence to the country of the Illinois. Being unable to obtain more than four canoes, which were wholly insufficient to contain all the merchandise and the various articles destined for his southern enterprise, he was obliged to leave a portion of his goods in the *Griffon*, with directions to the pilot to deposit them at Missillimackinac, until the vessel should call for them, on her return voyage.‡

\* Margry, vol. i., p. 450. Hennepin, La., p. 68. Hennepin, N. D., p. 140. Hennepin says, the *Griffon* left Missillimackinac on the second of September.

† Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 450. Hennepin, N. D., p. 140.

‡ Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 450.

The *Griffon* sailed for the Niagara on the eighteenth of September, but without La Salle; a fatal error, which probable caused the loss of the vessel, her cargo and crew. A favorable wind bore her from the harbor; and, with a single gun, she bid adieu to her enterprising builder, who never saw her again. She bore a cargo, valued, with the vessel, at fifty or sixty thousand francs, obtained at a great sacrifice of time and treasure. She was placed under the command of the pilot, Luc, assisted by a supercargo and five good sailors; with directions to call at Missillimackinac, and from thence proceed to the Niagara. Nothing more was heard of her. On the second day after she sailed, a storm arose which lasted five days. It was one of those destructive gales which usually prevail at that season over the northern lakes. She is reported to have been seen among the islands in the northerly end of Lake Michigan, two days after sailing, by some Pottawatamies, who advised the pilot to wait for more favorable weather. They last saw her half a league from the shore, helplessly driven by the storm upon a sandy bar, where she probably foundered; a total loss, with all on board.\*

A hatchway, a cabin door, the truck of a flag-staff, a piece of rope, a pack of spoiled beaver skins, two pair of linen breeches torn and spoiled with tar, were subsequently found, and recognized as relics of the ill-fated ship.†

The day after she sailed, La Salle, with the Recollects and fourteen men, left in four bark canoes, laden with a forge and its appurtenances, carpenters', joiners', and sawyers' tools, with arms and merchandise, and pursued his way along the western shore of Lake Michigan, and entered the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, in the prosecution of his enterprise. After leaving Green Bay, he had hardly crossed half way from the island to the main shore, when the same storm in which the *Griffon* was wrecked, burst upon his party, in all its fury. They succeeded

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\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 142. Margry, Découv., vol. i., pp. 430, 451.

† Margry, Découv., vol. ii., p. 74.



in landing in a small sandy bay, where they were detained five days, waiting for the abatement of the tempest. In the mean time, La Salle was filled with anxious forebodings as to the safety of his vessel.\* Many months elapsed before he heard of its loss. It was not the only disaster, but one of a series, which befell this enterprising explorer. Yet his iron will was not subdued, nor his impetuous ardor diminished. He continued to prosecute his discoveries, under the most disheartening reverses, with a self-reliance and energy that never faltered. He was equal to every situation, whether sharing the luxuries of civilized life, or the privations of the wilderness; whether contending with the snows of a Canadian winter, or the burning heats of Texas; whether paddling his canoe along the northern lakes, or seeking, by sea, for the mouth of the Mississippi. His eventful life embodied the elements of a grand epic poem, full of romantic interest and graphic incident; alternating in success and failure, and culminating in a tragic death.

France and America, in friendly and honorable rivalry, are now seeking to do justice to his fame. The rehearsal of the story of the *Griffon*, the building of which, through his enterprise, was the earliest event of historical interest on the Niagara frontier, seems, on this bi-centennial anniversary, an appropriate tribute to his memory.

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\* Hennepin, N. D., p. 144. Margry, Découv., vol. i., p. 451.

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# A HISTORY OF THE ISRAELITES IN BUFFALO.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, MARCH 20, 1876, AND REVISED AND CONTINUED TO THE  
PRESENT TIME.

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BY REV. S. FALK.\*

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:

WE live in the first centennial year of these United States; a period abounding in glorious reminiscences of patriotic enthusiasm; of brave exploits in the Revolutionary War, and of the legislative wisdom, which, almost one hundred years ago, on the virgin soil of the New World, gave birth to this republic. And we celebrate our government as one granting and guaranteeing the largest measure of civil and religious freedom a citizen could reasonably expect; one which generously opened the gates on all sides for settlement upon her lands, to the children of all nations, treating none as step-children. This republic, one hundred years ago a weak infant, now stands before the world, a giant.

The Children of Israel, since the destruction of the second Temple at Jerusalem by the Romans scattered over the whole

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\* Rabbi of Temple Beth Zion.



habitable globe, banished and oppressed, hunted by hatred and prejudice, fleeced by princes and nobles, and continually made the objects of derision and plunder by misguided multitudes, especially hail this Genius of Liberty; for it opened to them a free asylum, where they might dwell in safety, and identify themselves with the interests of the nation by developing and practically employing their faculties throughout society, in every lawful pursuit. From all countries, pre-eminently those of Europe, the Israelites began to flock to the shores of the United States. As a matter of course, the oldest and largest cities, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Richmond, Charleston, New Orleans, Boston, Cincinnati, show the earliest records of Jewish settlements in this country. Buffalo, one of the younger cities, is naturally behind these in the date of Jewish arrivals, as well as in the number of Jewish inhabitants.

The Jews, a people who profess a historically developed religion, and have kept pace with the march of History from the civilization of ancient Egypt down to the present day,—who were, in the Middle Ages, the teachers of philosophy, and gave to Europe the impulse of scientific progress,—have nowhere failed to excite the curiosity of the inhabitants of the places where they have taken up their abode. I have no doubt, gentlemen, that you have felt, at times, some interest in the representatives of this people in our goodly city; and in grateful appreciation of the resolution of this society, which last winter made me a resident member, an honor certainly undeserved on my part, I have undertaken to entertain you, if I may, this evening, with a history of the Israelites of Buffalo; to tell you of their original settlement here, their subsequent organizations, and their social position.

The knowledge of facts anterior to my own experience, I have derived mostly from authentic records; and, wherever these were found wanting in positive information, I have resorted to verbal information, from those on whose memory reliance could be placed.

As soon as Buffalo had risen from the rank of a village, to the significance of a city, Israelites began to find their way to this Queen City of the Lakes.

The first Israelite found residing here by those who came later, was a Mr. Flersheim, from Frankfort-on-the-Main. His occupation was that of a private teacher, giving instruction in German. He must have been in Buffalo as early as 1835. The second was Barnard Lichtenstein, who is still living, and resides in Waupun, Wisconsin. He was known here in 1838, and was a constant resident of Buffalo till about two years ago. The third was Salomon Phillipp, from Hamburg. He was never married, and died here in March, 1867. The fourth was Elias Bernheimer. Then came Mr. Joseph E. Strass, a Bavarian, who arrived here in the spring of 1843, and resides here still. Among the earliest settlers of Jewish birth, succeeding these, were Mark Moritz, Samuel Altman and Michael Will. Noah; the latter, an Englishman, whose wife still resides here.

It behooves me, before proceeding further, to offer some explanatory remarks about the Jewish worship and religious observances, at that early day everywhere intact.

Ten male Israelites, who have passed the thirteenth year of their age, are the number requisite to form a congregation entitled to hold Divine service; that is, the reading of the Law from the scroll of parchment, and the recital of prayers, are not allowed with a less number than ten. A beautiful custom in Israel, still pretty generally observed, is the holding of Divine service on the anniversary of the death of father or mother; including the offering of special prayers for the departed soul. This secures to the deceased a sacred memory, and at the same time fosters filial affection in the hearts of the rising generation. Up to this day, conservative Israelites are careful not to neglect such anniversaries. Hence, no sooner could the first few settlers of the Hebrew persuasion bring together the number requisite for holding Divine service,



than they solicited the attendance of every available one, for the observance just described. Thus the nuclei of Jewish associations were formed. Such religious assemblages were gathered in the parlors of those who needed them. Divine service was also conducted in private rooms on high feasts, such as New Year's Day, Day of Atonement and Passover.

The first public worship of Israelites known to have been held in Buffalo, took place in the old Concert Hall, afterwards Townsend Hall, southwest corner of Main and Swan streets, in the spring of 1847, for the celebration of our Passover feast; the rental fee for that purpose having been obtained by the voluntary contributions of the participants.

The Israelites having increased in number—the women feeling likewise the inward necessity of enjoying the spiritual benefits of public Divine worship—the want of an organized religious society was deeply felt by all. Therefore, “actuated by a sense of gratitude for enjoyment of their inalienable human rights, granted them in the land of their adoption, and for the inestimable privilege of moving at liberty in the ‘land of the free,’ to form associations of their own; recognizing at the same time the duty of pecuniarily assisting, and personally attending upon, sick brethren, and piously adhering to the time-honored custom of watching with their sick co-religionists in their dying hours, and reciting the religious profession, that they might expire in the faith of their fathers,” the so-called *Jacobsohn Society* was organized on the third day of October, 1847. Eleven gentlemen united in this, whose names were as follows: Louis Dahlman, Hirsch Sinzheimer, Moritz Weil, Emanuel Strauss, Joseph Mayer, Sam. Held, Jacob Löwenthal, Louis Rindskopf, Samuel Desbecker, Abraham Strass and Joseph E. Strass. Their first president was Louis Dahlman, and their main object was visiting the sick, dispensing weekly benefits, and securing decent burial of the dead in accordance with Jewish rites.

The necessity of procuring a Jewish burying ground forced

itself on the members of the Jacobsohn Society on the death of the wife of Elias Bernheimer. Ever since the patriarch, Jacob, in his last words, said to his son Joseph, "I pray thee, do not bury me in Egypt, but I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in this burying place," there existed a strong desire in the hearts of Israelites, for burial in a spot *consecrated by Israelites*, for their last resting place. And so, here, the Jacobsohn Society bought a piece of land for their burying ground, situated near Batavia street, now fronting Fillmore avenue. This burial place was, however, abandoned July 19th, 1861.

But to care for the sick and the dead was not the only object of the society. They had, in their constitution, a paragraph requiring members to bring their disputes, arising from injury done to their interests; as well as all matters touching the honor or reputation of members, before the board of the society for adjustment, in order to avoid going to law with co-religionists; monetary affairs in dispute, to be submitted to a peace-committee for arbitration. The constitution also contained a clause imposing fines on members for proven slanders, or any attempts to injure the character of a brother, or do him bodily harm.

Practically useful, however, as this society was,—benevolent in its intent, and calculated to be a guardian even of the morality of its members,—it did not exist longer than five years. Several influential members had removed from the city. New elements had been added, which disturbed the harmony that at first marked its progress; and the remaining members, on account of continued discussions, finally agreed to dissolve the society, and divide its accumulated funds.

From the fact of Israel's dispersion among all nations, you will readily perceive, as you have undoubtedly noticed in the statement already given about the first Jewish settlers, that the Israelites belonged to different nationalities. Besides the prejudice which education within the form and life of a particular



nationality naturally breeds, there was also in the matter of religion a barrier of separation, a variation in sentiment and practice, which worked the stronger, as it was connected with nationality. In Europe there are three principal liturgies in use at Divine service, public or private; namely, the German, the Polish, and the Portuguese *Minhag*.<sup>\*</sup> They differ mainly in the pronunciation of the Hebrew, and in the wording and length of their prayers. The variation is not in creed, but in the mode of worship. Usage, however, in course of time becomes law; and habit is man's second nature. It soon became obvious that the Israelites of Buffalo, as new-comers were added to their ranks, hailing as they did from different countries and nations, could not harmonize the peculiarities of their respective forms of synagogical worship, and of the various usages to which they were accustomed from their earliest childhood. This circumstance, together with a heterogeneous social life, soon created a division among the Israelites in Buffalo. Poland and Russia, containing a greater number of Israelites than any other countries, sent very many of them as emigrants to America; numbers of whom came to Buffalo. Bavaria, where they were the most severely oppressed and the most cruelly proscribed, sent the greatest number of German Israelites to this land. Hence, according to nationality or national affinity, and liturgical predilections, religious societies were formed everywhere in this country, in earlier times; whereas, now, the distinction of *Reform* and *Orthodoxy* decides Israelites as to uniting with one congregation or another.

The need of a place for public worship came to be felt in this city more and more, from Sabbath to Sabbath. The solemn feasts were approaching, the services of a minister were frequently needed, not only for conducting Divine service, but also in maintaining the strict observance of the dietary laws. Accordingly, in the year 1847, the first Jewish congregation in

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<sup>\*</sup> Ritual, or Liturgical Service.

this city was organized, and named "*Beth El*;"\* with Mr. Mark Moritz, now living in San Francisco, California, as its first president; the Rev. Isaac M. Slatky, who, a few months ago, died in ripe old age at the General Hospital, being the first minister. This congregation, in its infancy, worshipped in the uppermost story of the Hoyt building, on the northwest corner of Main and Eagle streets. An amusing incident once occurred there, which deserves mention. It was on a Day of Atonement that Rev. Mr. Slatky stood in the synagogue the whole day, as the custom was, in his white linen robe and white cap, with a white girdle about his loins. Toward dusk he again began to officiate. The congregation could no longer read without lights; but it being strictly forbidden to the Israelites of the orthodox school to kindle a light or touch a candlestick on such a day, they sent for some non-Israelite to light their hall. They happened to procure a tall negro. He, on entering the synagogue, seeing Mr. Slatky with his pallid face and his long white beard, in full keeping with his white attire, and scarf with the fringes prescribed in the Bible (Numbers xv., 38, 39), was seized with terror—ran out as quickly as he could—and reaching the stairs, fell headlong down the whole flight, causing quite a sensation by his precipitate exit.

Beth El congregation occupied this place over two years; and, in 1850, bought the old school-house on Pearl street, near Eagle. On Friday, July 22d, 1850, the new synagogue into which that school-house had been re-modelled, was consecrated to the worship of God. Rev. Mr. Isaacs of New York, invited for the purpose, delivered the dedication sermon in the English language. This was, doubtless, the first English sermon ever listened to at a Jewish Divine service in this city.

This synagogue, surrounded as it was by all sorts of business establishments, by which its worship was often disturbed, was at last sold by the congregation, and abandoned in October,

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\* House of God.



1873. A new building, more pleasing and spacious, and more in accord with the requirements and circumstances of the society, was erected on Elm street, between Eagle and North Division, and dedicated on Friday, August 14th, 1874. I had the honor of delivering the dedication sermon. At present, Mr. Henry Brown is president, and Rev. Philip Bernstein minister, of that conservative congregation.

The Polish liturgy being used in the worship of this society, its services could not give satisfaction to the German Israelites. Hence, eleven of them called a preliminary meeting, which was held November 14th, 1850, and followed by another, November 27th, at which a congregation was organized according to the German liturgy. This was called *Beth Zion*,\* and the first Board of Trustees elected, consisted of E. J. Bernheimer, President; Albert Strass, Vice-President and Treasurer; Moritz Weil, Secretary; Israel Drinker, David Kurtz and Jacob Strauss, Trustees. Rev. Mr. Slatky, who had severed his connection with the Beth El congregation, now engaged himself to the German congregation, Beth Zion, from December 1st, 1850, for five dollars per month, and from May 1st, 1851, at one hundred dollars *per annum*. He was not required to preach, or to teach children; he simply read the prayers and the *Thora*,† and attended to the procurement of meat according to the Scriptural and Rabbinical dietary laws.

The congregation Beth Zion at first worshipped in the parlor of Mr. Sinzheimer, No. 55 Oak street; who received fifty cents per month for the use of his room. For this consideration, the society was also entitled to hold its business meetings there, at any time they pleased.

Any member of this congregation, not belonging to the Jacobsohn Society, could, by an arrangement perfected with the latter, purchase a right in the burying ground of that society, by paying an initiation fee of three dollars, and during life-

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\* House of Zion.

† Roll of the Law.

time twelve and one-half cents per month, as regular dues.

Long after the dissolution of the Jacobsohn Society, namely, November 18th, 1857, the surviving members thereof deeded their burying ground to the congregation Beth Zion.\*

Rev. Mr. Slatky served this congregation only three weeks. The next minister regularly elected, was Mr. Daniel Shire; who entered upon his duties, January 6th, 1851, and is still a resident of our city.

The congregation Beth Zion labored under many trying disadvantages. It rented various places of worship from time to time, its last synagogical home being the house on the north-west corner of South Division and Elm streets, which was occupied till the organization disbanded in 1864.

But, meanwhile, discord very often appeared among the members, arising from their peculiar notions, which none were willing to relinquish for the sake of peace, or to favor others. They had, for the most part, well educated ministers, whose efficiency, however, was much impaired, and whose dignity was lowered, by functions unbecoming a minister.

This society deserves especial credit for the fact that by it peculiar regard was paid to the sacred duty devolving upon Jewish parents of having their children instructed in the religion of their fathers; the minister being the school teacher, and receiving all the pecuniary income which this afforded, while the congregation furnished room and fuel, free of charge.

Beth Zion, however, struggled on, without any sign of prosperity. Meanwhile the War of the Rebellion broke out. Times changed remarkably within two years, and brought new accessions of energetic Israelites to Buffalo, in addition to those who had settled here after the panic of 1857. The claim of modern times on behalf of the exercise of religion, was felt and recognized on all hands. Wealth increased. Parents realized, more and more, their obligation to provide a liberal

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\* See Buffalo Cemeteries, p. 73.



religious education for their children. The antiquated arrangement in the synagogues, which placed the women in a gallery, almost hidden from the eyes of men and boys—the daughters being left at home till they were married—ceased to satisfy those who were fully imbued with the progressive spirit which in other cities called flourishing congregations into existence, built beautiful temples, and established Reform services therein, to the glory of God. Those Israelites of Buffalo who favored liberal ideas, felt the weight of responsibility for the fact that they were not worthily represented before the Christian community.

Actuated by these sentiments, the following named gentlemen, Jacob Altman, Henry Brock, Henry Cone, Henry Friend, Leopold Keiser, Siegmund Levyn, Leopold Marcus and Marcus Wall, in September, 1863, requested the Rev. Dr. Wise of Cincinnati to send them a minister to preach before them and others, on the high feasts of New Year's Day and Day of Atonement. Kremlin Hall was rented, and converted into a place of worship for the time being. It was an entire novelty to many Israelites in this city, to see a Divine service conducted with such essential deviation from the old Ritual:—a modern service, enhanced in interest by choir-singing; and edifying, through the preaching of the word of God in a known tongue.

The people were on this occasion favorably impressed with the new form of worship. It was some time, of course, before the Reform movement could win over a considerable number. But those at first interested in the cause, showed willingness to give a practical shape to the idea which agitated the Jewish community; and, in response to a call, a preliminary meeting was held, October 9th, 1864, at Kremlin Hall, for the purpose of organizing a Reform congregation. Mr. Joseph E. Strass called the meeting to order; Mr. Leopold Keiser was elected chairman, and Mr. Louis M. Brock, secretary, *pro tem.* A committee presented a report in favor of organizing a congregation, to be known as *The Congregation of Temple Beth Zion*; recommending that its worship should be conducted on Reform

principles, and that a school for the religious education of the children, held to be one of the main objects of the organization, should be established. The report was unanimously adopted; and, at a subsequent meeting, a committee was empowered to lease, buy or build a place of worship, and to engage a minister for one year; it being provided that no member should subscribe less than twenty-five dollars to the support of the congregation.

The following were the charter members of this Reform congregation: Jacob Altman, Simon Bergman, Salomon Biesenthal, Moritz Block, Henry Brock, Louis M. Brock, Henry Cone, Samuel Desbecker, Abraham Falck, Siegmund Hofeller, Leopold Keiser, Emanuel Levi, Siegmund Levyn, Leopold Marcus, Louis Michaels, David Rosenau, Salomon Rosenau, Joseph E. Strass, Marcus Wall, Leopold Warner and Marcus Weiss.

The number being so limited, negotiations were opened with the old Beth Zion congregation, looking to a fusion of the two societies. The plan proved to be as favorable as it was desirable. Old Beth Zion lacking numerical strength, was satisfied that it could sustain itself no longer, yet its members insisted on retaining their name Beth Zion for the new union, and this was agreed upon. The name of the Reform congregation, in contradistinction to the old society, is, therefore, "*Temple Beth Zion.*"

Among other conditions of the fusion, old Beth Zion gave to the new organization their burying ground on Pine Hill; to which, last year, Mr. Simon Weil added by a legal instrument the adjoining tract, which was owned by those members of the old Beth Zion who declined joining the new one. Temple Beth Zion owns, also, the abandoned burying ground on Batavia street.

The first officers of Temple Beth Zion were: Siegmund Levyn, President; Siegmund Hofeller, Vice-President; Jacob Altman, Treasurer; David Rosenau, Secretary; Salomon Bie-



senthal, Leopold Keiser, Joseph E. Strass and Leopold Marcus, Trustees. The first minister of the congregation was Rev. I. N. Cohen, whom I had the honor to succeed, November 1st, 1866. The present officers are: President, Henry Brock; Vice-President, Leopold Keiser; Treasurer, Lehman Hofeller.

The next important step, after the election of Mr. Cohen, who had formerly been minister of the old Beth Zion, was the purchase of a place of worship. The Methodist Episcopal church on Niagara street, just below Eagle, then owned by Mr. William G. Fargo, was purchased for the sum of thirteen thousand dollars, and was suitably fitted up for Jewish worship. Over seven thousand dollars were raised forthwith, by subscription; which Mr. Abraham Altman headed with the munificent gift of one thousand dollars.

The Temple was dedicated, Friday, May 25th, 1865, with appropriate solemnities; Rev. Dr. Wise of Cincinnati delivering the dedication sermon. The sacrifices in time and means brought for this good object are truly praiseworthy; and deserve to be remembered among the facts gathered and recorded under the auspices of our local Historical Society.

In most houses of worship on both sides of the Atlantic, trained choirs have to be dearly paid for. The congregation Temple Beth Zion deserves to be noted as one of the laudable exceptions. From its very beginning, members who contributed large sums annually to its support formed a volunteer choir, attended regularly every Divine service, and vied with the lady choristers in promptly obeying the organist's summons to rehearsals. The names of those who for eight or ten years persevered in setting so noble an example, ought to be recorded; they were Misses Fanny Biesenthal, Mathilda Brock, and Mathilda Wiener; and Messrs. Louis M. Brock, Henry Cone, Daniel Shire, Siegmund Levyn and Leopold Marcus. This volunteer choir has been justly the pride of the congregation.

Peace and harmony among the members, who count now seventy-eight paying seat-owners, and an energetic and well-

meaning administration of congregational affairs, have so far marked the progress, revealed the strength, and made known the secret of the vitality of this youthful society.

On Elm street, between Batavia and Clinton, worship every morning and evening the congregation "*Berith Shalom*,"\* a society consisting wholly of Prussian Israelites. They for twelve years constituted a Mutual Benefit Society for attending to the sick and burying the dead; but gradually merged into a religious congregation of the strictest orthodox type. They built a frame synagogue, which was dedicated on Friday, August 24th, 1873. Their present president is Mr. Gumbinsky; and their minister is Rev. Mr. Jacobsohn.

The social position of the Israelites of Buffalo, may be best understood from the societies they maintain and the occupations they represent.

The Hebrew Union Benevolent Association originated from a meeting, which was held July 15th, 1863, in the house of Samuel Kohn on Batavia street, for the purpose of raising funds to buy substitutes for every Israelite who might be drafted into the army of the United States. But the waves of patriotism ran so high on that occasion, that instead of raising funds, the formation of a Jewish company of volunteers was reported; thirty-two names being subscribed for membership. Of the signers, nine actually enlisted in different regiments. Instead of furnishing substitutes, a benevolent society was started on the same day with the formation of the military company; and funds were secured, by subscription, for the efficient assistance of our Jewish home poor, and worthy Jewish travelers. This society has done immense good in these thirteen years of its existence. Its first president was Leon Mayer; its present president is Simon Bergman. The ladies also called a benevolent society into existence for a similar purpose, pre-eminently for dispensing relief to sick and needy women. Its present

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\* Covenant of Peace.



president is Mrs. William Friedman; who, two years ago, was chiefly instrumental in organizing a Ladies' Sewing Society, to furnish wearing apparel for the destitute.

In the summer of 1871, the ladies of Temple Beth Zion joined the Protestant Ladies' Hospital Association of this city; and have, so far, every year returned a liberal donation toward the support of that philanthropic institution. The first two lady managers of our congregation were Mrs. Abraham Altman and Mrs. Henry Cone. The present two managers are Mrs. Abraham Altman and Mrs. Simon Bergman.

In the fall of 1873, the congregation of Temple Beth Zion joined the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Executive Board of which is in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the object, the scientific education and professional qualification of Jewish ministers and teachers in this country, in a rabbinial college, to be established for this purpose. In July, 1875, the second annual council of delegates from the congregations constituting the Union was held in this city, in McArthur's Hall; where a large company of divines, gentlemen of the legal profession and prominent merchants, met and discussed the affairs and prospects of the much needed Hebrew Union College.

Besides the societies of a purely charitable nature, there is a society of True Sisters; for mutual care in case of sickness and demise.

There are four Jewish lodges in the city. The oldest is Montefiore Lodge, No. 70, I. O. B. B.,\* which meets twice a month at the Lodge Hall, No. 13 Court street; where, also, the other lodges (two *Kesher shel Barzel*,† and one of the Independent Order of Free Sons of Israel) hold their services.

In respect to nationality, the Israelites are English, French, Germans, Hollanders, Austrians, Hungarians, Polanders, and Russians.

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\* Independent Order *Benai Berith* (Sons of the Covenant.)

† Band of Iron.

As to occupation, they are divided as follows, alphabetically arranged:

Banker, . . . . .	1	Furnishing-goods dealer (wh.),	1
Barber, . . . . .	1	Hardware dealer, . . . .	1
Butchers (wholesale), . . . .	3	Insurance agent, . . . .	1
Carpenter, . . . . .	1	Jewelers (wholesale), . . .	5
Cattle dealers, . . . . .	12	Metal dealers (wholesale),	5
Cigar makers (retail), at least,	16	Milliners, . . . . .	3
Cigar maker (wholesale), . . .	1	Ministers, . . . . .	3
Cigar dealer, . . . . .	1	Musician, . . . . .	1
Clothiers (retail), about . . .	18	Piece goods (wholesale), . .	2
Clothing manuf'r's (wholesale),	6	Retired merchants, . . . .	5
Dry-goods dealers, . . . . .	2	Shoemaker, . . . . .	1
Editor, . . . . .	1	Tailors, . . . . .	dozens
Fancy-goods dealers, . . . . .	2	Teachers, . . . . .	4
Farmers (near Buffalo), . . . .	2	Variety dealers (1 wholesale),	2

It is a safe estimate to say that there are one hundred to one hundred and twenty dwelling houses and business buildings belonging to Israelites in this city; the largest Jewish property-owners being Messrs. Michaels Brothers. Besides all these items it must be stated that the Israelites of Buffalo co-mingle with the various elements of population in secret societies; some of them even taking a deep interest, especially in the higher degrees of Freemasonry. You will find the Jews in the firemen's companies; active members of several singing societies; in building and saving associations; in fire insurance companies; and they have their representative men in politics. Industrious and law-abiding citizens as they are, they identify themselves with the best interests of our city; and in their religious assemblages they offer prayers for the welfare of the community and the public authorities.

This brief history, deficient as it may appear in some respects, is, I trust, illustrative no less of the cultivation of the spiritual and social interests, than of the increase in number and wealth, of the Israelites. The blessings of this free country, and the enjoyment of equal rights by all her inhabitants,



have ripened fruits in the province of Judaism, creditable and beneficial both to the Israelites and to their fellow-citizens. In the growth, embellishment and prosperity of this city we have an indisputable share. It is acknowledged, and by records proven, that Jewish children, in a very favorable proportion, distinguish themselves in our public schools; and Jewish students have graduated from our Central High School with well merited honors. Being just as far from self-glorification as from self-humiliation, I feel warranted to predict that the proverbial sobriety and benevolence, the earnestness of purpose and domestic virtues, of the Israelites, when more widely known, will soon dispel the mist of prejudice which, so long, so sadly wrong, has held the true Jewish character in obscurity. The praiseworthy aspiration of Israelites to associate with the better classes of society, may sporadically revive the old prejudice in malicious and narrow-minded individuals; but, thanks to the enlightenment of our age, and thanks to the advanced public sentiment and sense of justice fostered by our free institutions, such social phenomena will, instead of doing harm, tend rather to show the Hebrew race to better advantage. Let us hope that the time may not be far distant which will break down the barrier of separation between children of the same Heavenly Father and the same Mother, our common country.

FOUNDING OF  
THE CITY OF ARARAT  
ON GRAND ISLAND—BY MORDECAI M. NOAH.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, MARCH 5, 1866.

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BY HON. LEWIS F. ALLEN.

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GRAND ISLAND lies in the Niagara river, County of Erie, and State of New York. Its south end is about four miles below the mouth of Lake Erie, to the north, and its north end is about the same distance above the Niagara Falls. Its extreme mean length is a trifle over eight miles; its extreme breadth is a little over six miles—but that width extends only a small distance—the average being probably four and a half miles; containing in its whole area, by survey, 17,381 acres. It is a body of good agricultural land, and until about the year 1834, with the exception of ten or twelve hundred acres, was covered with a heavy growth of timber. Its situation along the shore of the river is exceedingly pleasant and commanding, elevated six to thirty feet above the water; and along its various coasts embraces many picturesque views of the city of Buffalo, the villages of Tonawanda and Niagara Falls, and the adjacent Canadian and American shores. At its southwestern extremity lies, separated by the small arm of Beaver creek about one hundred feet in width, Beaver Island, containing forty acres. At its northwestern extremity, is a small inlet of



deep water, called Burnt Ship bay, in which are two sunken hulks of vessels, said, by tradition (and no doubt truly), to be driven in there from Chippewa by the British forces and destroyed by their French commanders, in the French-and-English Canadian war of the year 1755. In very low water the timber heads of one of these vessels may be seen a few inches above the surface. Separated by this bay, a narrow marsh, and an insignificant streamlet of only a few feet in width, lies Buckhorn Island, containing, by survey, one hundred and forty-six and one-half acres. No other islands are immediately contiguous to Grand Island.

Spafford's *Gazetteer*, printed in the year 1824, relates that the State of New York, by a treaty held with the Seneca Indians at Buffalo, September 12, 1815, purchased of that tribe, Grand and several other small islands in the Niagara river. For Grand Island, this authority does not give the price paid by the State. My impression is, that I have seen in some other work that eleven thousand dollars was the consideration; and for the other small islands, Spafford states that the consideration was one thousand dollars and an annuity of five hundred dollars.

Immediately after its purchase by the State, numerous squatters flocked on to Grand Island, and built cabins along its shores on both sides—on the west, or Canadian side, mostly—for the purpose of cutting, and working into staves, the valuable white-oak timber which abounded there, for the Montreal and Quebec markets. From those cities the staves were shipped, mainly, to the British West India Islands. The staves were taken from Grand Island in scow-boats to Chippewa, thence wagoned around the Falls to Lewiston, and there put on board sail-vessels for Montreal and Quebec.

At the time the State of New York purchased Grand Island, the territorial titles of the lake and river islands between the United States and Canada were undetermined, and so they remained until the year 1822, when all the islands in the Niagara

river, excepting Navy Island, opposite the foot of Grand Island, were declared by the boundary commissioners, appointed by the governments of the United States and Great Britain, to belong to the United States, and consequently they came under the jurisdiction of the State of New York. Up to the year 1819, the squatters held undisputed possession of the land, amenable to neither New York nor Canadian law; setting up a sort of government of their own, wherein they settled their own disputes, if they had any, but defying the authority of either jurisdiction on the opposite shores. In a foot-note to the *Field Notes* of the survey of the island made in the months of October and November, in the year 1824, by Silas D. Kellogg and James Tanner, after describing Lot No. 18, on the east, or American bank of the river, the surveyors remark:

“On this lot stands the remains of a log cabin, in which the renowned Mr. Clarke used to reside. While it was undetermined to which government the island belonged, this man came on, and became generalissimo and the director of an independent judiciary, whose laws and customs were enforced and practiced like those of the King of the Outlaws.”

This Mr. Clarke—“Governor” he used to be called when administering squatter-law on the islands—I knew very well in the year 1835. He then lived at Pendleton, in Niagara county, on the Erie canal, where he had the reputation of a good citizen. I asked him about his residence and administration at Grand Island. He evidently disliked to talk upon the subject, and waived it at every attempt I made to get a history of the affair, but acknowledged the fact of living there, and being somewhat a conspicuous man among the people. He was then perhaps fifty years of age, but whether now living or not, I am unable to say. So annoying had the squatters on the island become to the neighboring shores, by their frequent acts of outlawry, and their depredations on the valuable timber of the island, that the New York State authorities took summary measures to remove them. An instance was related, that when a sheriff or constable, armed with a civil process, had landed there to



arrest one of the squatters; several of them assembled, and treated both the officer and his authority with contempt; took his oars or paddles out of his boat, and set him adrift down the river, where he floated for some distance, until some one, touched by his distress, put out with another boat and took him over to the American shore.

Immediately after this, in the year 1819, Sheriff Cronk, of this county (then Niagara), was clothed with a requisition from the State authorities, to call out a company of the militia in and about Buffalo, to make a descent on the island, and rid it of the squatters. Colonel Benjamin Hodge (still living with us) then having the requisite military command, with a sufficient number of armed men, and accompanied by the sheriff, took boats from the "Seeley Tavern," about three miles below Black Rock, on the river shore—landed on the island—made its entire circuit—drove off every squatter, either on to the Canadian or American shores, and burned every dwelling and other building to the ground. Thus was established the authority and law of the State over Grand Island. A portion of these squatters, however, immediately returned; but, as they ceased cutting timber and held themselves amenable to the law, they were not again molested by State authority. They rebuilt their cabins, cultivated their little patches of clearing, and remained peaceable citizens, taking a little timber "on the sly," only; keeping a few cattle and pigs, and eking out a poor, but, to them, quite satisfactory subsistence.

Grand Island, in those early days of the Niagara frontier, in its grand and deep solitude, was a charming place for those who loved to range the woods, or float on the quiet pellucid waters of the noble river encircling it. From head to foot, along the shores, or in the deepest wilderness, on a still day, the roar of the Falls below was always heard, and along its westerly shore their ascending spray was always in sight. Men of thought and reflection loved occasionally to camp for days on its shores, and fish and hunt, as the mood for either recre-

ation impelled them; and no wonder that the "loafing," desultory habits of the squatters found there a congenial dwelling-place. There were the serene sky, the clear waters, the venerable trees—all in quiet summer beauty, inviting to repose, to listlessness and laziness, so congenial to squatter and roving life. Who can blame the vagabonds for loving to live and harbor there!

The woods abounded with deer; occasionally a bear, a wolf, or other large game worthy a hunter's elevated ambition, was found. Great numbers of raccoons, squirrels, and other small furry quadrupeds inhabited the woods, while myriads of ducks and other game-birds thronged the shores and waters in their proper season. The Indians from the Seneca and Tonawanda reservations, held annual hunts of days or weeks upon the island, and carried away canoe-loads of the choicest venison.

The fishing, too, was magnificent. Tons of the finest muskellonge, yellow pike, sturgeon, black bass, pickerel, mullet and smaller fish were hauled up to the shore in seines in their seasons, or drawn out by the hook and line of an adroit angler. The hook-and-line fishing of the Niagara was nowhere excelled. No wonder such a paradise of hunters and sportsmen was sought and lived upon by those to whose habits steady labor was irksome. The warm, sunny nooks of "the clearings" produced every annual garden-fruit and vegetable of the climate. Melons and other choice delicacies abounded with every one who had the industry to plant and cultivate them. Hunting parties would go down from Black Rock and Buffalo, for a week's recreation, and "drive" the woods for deer, while "'coons," squirrels, ducks, and other game were the continuous incidental trophies of their sport. So passed, for several years, the squatter and camp life of Grand Island.

In the year 1824, the State ordered a survey of the land into farm lots, and in that year a party was fitted out for the purpose. A part of the work was done under the supervision of Silas D. Kellogg, in that year. But Mr. Kellogg sickened and



died before the work was completed; and, early in the next year, James Tanner was commissioned, and finished the work.

In this year (1825) an eventful history was about to open on the Niagara frontier. Those members of our Society who then lived here, in the relation of their reminiscences of that period, have been prone to mark it as an eventful year in three striking incidents relating to the history of Buffalo, viz: the visit of General La Fayette, the completion and opening of the Erie canal, and "the hanging of the three Thayers." They might have added to it another memorable occurrence, not only to Buffalo, but to the Niagara frontier. Following the survey of Grand Island into farm-lots, for settlement, of which the State authorities gave notice in the public newspapers, an idea occurred to the late Major Mordecai Manuel Noah, a distinguished Israelite, of the city of New York, then editor of a prominent political journal, called *The National Advocate*, that Grand Island would make a suitable asylum for the Jews of all nations, whereon they could establish a great city, and become emancipated from the oppression bearing so heavily upon them in foreign countries.

To understand this matter thoroughly, it is necessary to go somewhat into particulars. I knew Major Noah well. Physically, he was a man of large muscular frame, rotund person, a benignant face, and most portly bearing. Although a native of the United States, the lineaments of his race were impressed upon his features with unmistakable character; and if the blood of the elder Patriarchs or David or Solomon flowed not in his veins, then both chronology and genealogy must be at fault. He was a Jew, thorough and accomplished. His manners were genial, his heart kind, and his generous sympathies embraced all Israel, even to the end of the earth. He was learned, too, not only in the Jewish and civil law, but in the ways of the world at large, and particularly in the faith and politics of "Saint Tammany" and "the Bucktail Party" of the State, of which his newspaper was the organ and chief ex-

pounder in the city of New York. He was a Counselor at Law in our courts, had been Consul-General for the United States at the Kingdom of Tunis, on the coast of Barbary,—at the time he held it, a most responsible trust. Although a visionary,—as some would call him—and an enthusiast in his enterprises, he had won many friends among the Gentiles, who had adopted him into their political associations. He had warm attachments and few hates, and if the sharpness of his political attacks created, for the time, a personal rancor in the breasts of his opponents, his genial, frank, childlike ingenuousness healed it all at the first opportunity. He was a pundit in Hebrew law, traditions and customs. “To the manner born,” he was loyal to his religion; and no argument or sophistry could swerve him from his fidelity, or uproot his hereditary faith. My friend and neighbor, William A. Bird, Esq., has related to me the following anecdote: Many years ago, when his mother, the late Mrs. Eunice Porter Bird Pawling, resided at Troy, New York, a society was formed, auxiliary to one organized in the city of New York, for the purpose of christianizing the Jews in all parts of the world. Mrs. Pawling, an energetic doer of good works, in the then infant city of her residence, was applied to for her cooperation in that novel benefaction. She had her own doubts, both of its utility and success, of which results have proved the correctness. But, determined to act understandingly, she wrote a letter to Major Noah, asking his views on so important a subject. He replied in a letter, elaborately setting forth the principles, the faith, and the policy of the Jewish people, their ancient hereditary traditions, their venerable history, their hope of a coming Messiah; and concluded by expressing the probability that the modern Gentiles would sooner be converted to the Jewish faith, than that the Jews would be converted to theirs.

Major Noah—as I observed, a visionary, somewhat, and an enthusiast altogether—made two grand mistakes in his plan. In the first place, he had no power or authority over his people;



and, in the next, he was utterly mistaken in their aptitude for the new calling he proposed them to fulfill. But he went on. He induced his friend, the late Samuel Leggett, of New York, to make a purchase of twenty-five hundred and fifty-five acres, partly at the head of Grand Island, and partly at its center, opposite Tonawanda, at the entrance of the Erie canal into the Niagara river. Either or both of those localities were favorable for building a city. These two tracts he thought sufficient for a settlement of his Jewish brethren; which, if successful, would result in all the lands of the island falling into their hands. Nor, on a fairly supposititious ground—presuming the Jews, in business affairs, to be like the Gentiles—were his theories so much mistaken. The canal, opening a new avenue to the great western world, from Lake Erie to the *ultima thule* of civilization at that day, was about to be completed. The Lakes had no extensive commerce. Capital was unknown as a commercial power in Western New York. The Jews had untold wealth, ready to be converted into active and profitable investment. Tonawanda, in common with Black Rock and Buffalo, with a perfect and capacious natural harbor, was one of the western termini of the Erie canal, and at the foot of the commerce of the western lakes. With sufficient steam-power, every sail craft and steam-boat on the Lakes could reach Grand Island and Tonawanda, discharge into, and take on their cargoes from canal-boats, and by their ample means thus command the western trade. Buffalo and Black Rock, although up to that time the chief recipients of the lake commerce, lacking moneyed capital, would not be able to compete with the energy and abundant resources of the proposed commercial cities to be established on Grand Island and at Tonawanda, and they must yield to the rivalry of the Jews. Such was Major Noah's theory, and such his plans. Mr. Leggett's co-operation, with abundant means for the land purchase, he had already secured. Through the columns of his own widely circulating *National Advocate* he promulgated his plan, and by the time the sale of the Grand

Island lots was to be made at the State Land Office in Albany, other parties of capitalists had concluded to take a venture in the speculation.

The sale took place. Mr. Leggett purchased one thousand and twenty acres at the head of the island, at the cost of seven thousand two hundred dollars, and fifteen hundred and thirty five acres along the river in a compact body, above, opposite, and below Tonawanda, at the price of nine thousand seven hundred and eighty-five dollars; being about fifty per cent. above the average of what the whole body of land sold at per acre,—that is to say: the whole seventeen thousand three hundred and eighty-one acres sold for seventy-six thousand two hundred and thirty dollars; being an average, including Mr. Leggett's purchase, of about four dollars and thirty-eight cents per acre.

Next to Leggett, Messrs. John B. Yates and Archibald McIntyre, then proprietors, by purchase from the State, of the vast system of lotteries, embracing those for the benefit of Union College, and other eleemosynary purposes—gambling in lotteries for the benefit of colleges and churches was thought to be a *moral* instrument in those days—purchased through other parties a large amount of the land, and “Peter Smith, of Peterboro” (living, however, at Schenectady,—and the most extensive land speculator in the state,—father of the present Gerrit Smith) took a large share of the remainder. To sum up, briefly, the result of the sale of the Grand Island lands: Leggett and Yates and McIntyre complied with the stipulated terms of the sale, paid over to the State their one-eighth of the purchase-money, and gave their bonds for the remainder; while Smith—wary in land-purchasing practice, *when the State of New York was the seller*—did no such thing. He paid his one-eighth of the purchase-money down, as did the others, but *neglected to give his bond* for payment of the balance. The consequence was, when the éclat of Noah's Ararat subsided, and his scheme proved a failure, the land went down in value, and



Smith forfeited his first payment, and the lots fell back to the State. But on a lower re-appraisal by the State some years afterwards, Smith again bought at less than half the price at which he originally purchased, made his one-eighth payment again, and gave his bond as required; thus pocketing, by his future sale of the property, over twenty thousand dollars in the transaction!

All this, however, aside from Mr. Leggett's purchase for the benefit of Major Noah, has nothing to do with our main history, and is only given as an occurrence of the times.

Major Noah, now secure in the possession of a nucleus for his coveted "City of Refuge for the Jews," addressed himself to its foundation and dedication. He had heralded his intentions through the columns of his *National Advocate*. His contemporaries of the press ridiculed his scheme, and predicted its failure; yet, true to his original purpose, he determined to carry it through. Wise Jews around him shook their heads in doubt of his ability to effect his plans, and withheld from him their support. But, nothing daunted, he ventured it unaided, and almost alone. By the aid of an indomitable friend, and equally enthusiastic co-laborer, Mr. A. B. Siexas, of New York, he made due preparations; and, late in the month of August, in the year 1825, with robes of office and insignia of rank securely packed, they left the city of New York for Buffalo. He was a stranger in our then little village of twenty-five hundred people, and could rely for countenance and aid only on his old friend, the late Isaac S. Smith, then residing here, whom he had known abroad while in his consulate at Tunis. In Mr. Smith, however, he found a ready assistant in his plans. Major Noah, with his friend Siexas, arrived in Buffalo in the last days of August. He had got prepared a stone which was to be "the chief of the corner," with proper inscription and of ample dimensions for the occasion. This stone was obtained from the Cleveland, Ohio, sandstone quarries. The inscription, written by Major Noah, was cut by the late Seth Chapin of Buffalo.

As, on examination when arriving here, he could not well get to Grand Island to locate and establish his city, it was concluded to lay the corner-stone in the Episcopal church of the village, then under the rectorship of the Rev. Addison Searle. As this strange and remarkable proceeding, and the novel act of laying a foundation for a Jewish city, with its imposing rites and formulæ, its regal pomp and Jewish ceremony, in a Christian Episcopal church, with the aid of its authorized rector, may strike the present generation with surprise, a word or two may be said of the transaction.

The Rev. Mr. Searle was, at that time, the officiating clergyman in the little church of St. Paul's, in the village of Buffalo, and had been placed there as a missionary by the late wise and excellent Bishop Hobart. He held a government commission as chaplain of the United States, and had been granted a some years' furlough from active duty. He had been on foreign cruises,—had coasted the Mediterranean, and spent months in the chief cities of its classic shores, and visited the beautiful Greek Island of Scio, a few weeks after the burning of its towns and the massacre of its people by the Turks, in 1822. He was an accomplished and genial man, of commanding person and portly mien; his manners were bland, and his address courtly. Whether he had made the acquaintance of Major Noah abroad or in New York, or whether he first met him on this occasion at Buffalo, I know not; but their intercourse here was cordial and friendly.

On the second day of September, 1825, the imposing ceremony of laying the corner-stone of the city of Ararat, to be built on Grand Island, took place; and, as a full account of the doings of the day, written by Major Noah himself, was published at the time in *The Buffalo Patriot, Extra*, I take the liberty of repeating them from that paper:

“It was known, at the sale of that beautiful and valuable tract called Grand Island, a few miles below this port, in the Niagara river, that it was purchased, in part, by the friends of Major Noah of New York, avowedly to



offer it as an asylum for his brethren of the Jewish persuasion, who, in the other parts of the world, are much oppressed; and it was likewise known that it was intended to erect upon the island a city called ARARAT. We are gratified to perceive, by the documents in this day's Extra, that coupled with this colonization is a Declaration of Independence, and the revival of the Jewish government under the protection of the United States,—after the dispersion of that ancient and wealthy people for nearly two thousand years,—and the appointment of Mr. Noah as first Judge. It was intended, pursuant to the public notice, to celebrate the event on the island; and a flag-staff was erected for the Grand Standard of Israel, and other arrangements made; but it was discovered that a sufficient number of boats could not be procured in time to convey all those to the island who were desirous of witnessing the ceremony, and the celebration took place this day in the village, which was both interesting and impressive. At dawn of day, a salute was fired in front of the Court House, and from the terrace facing the lake. At ten o'clock, the masonic and military companies assembled in front of the Lodge, and at eleven the line of procession was formed as follows:

## ORDER OF PROCESSION.

Grand Marshal, Col. Potter, on horseback.  
 Music.  
 Military.  
 Citizens.  
 Civil Officers.  
 United States Officers.  
 State Officers in Uniform.  
 President and Trustees of the Corporation.  
 Tyler.  
 Stewards.  
 Entered Apprentices.  
 Fellow Crafts.  
 Master Masons.  
 Senior and Junior Deacons.  
 Secretary and Treasurer,  
 Senior and Junior Wardens.  
 Masters of Lodges.  
 Past Masters.  
 Rev. Clergy.  
 Stewards, with corn, wine and oil.  
 Globe. { Principal Architect, } Globe.  
           { with square, level }  
           { and plumb. }  
           Bible.  
 Square and Compass, borne by a Master Mason.  
 The Judge of Israel,  
 In black, wearing the judicial robes of crimson silk, trimmed with  
 ermine and a richly embossed golden medal suspended  
 from the neck.  
 A Master Mason.  
 Royal Arch Masons.  
 Knights Templar.

“On arriving at the church door, the troops opened to the right and left and the procession entered the aisles, the band playing the Grand March from Judas Maccabeus. The full-toned organ commenced its swelling notes, performing the *Jubilate*. On the communion-table lay the cornerstone, with the following inscription (the Hebrew is from Deut., vi., 4):

שמך ישראל יי אלהינו  
יי אחד

ARARAT,

A City of Refuge for the Jews,

*Founded by MORDECAI MANUEL NOAH, in the Month Tizri*

*Sept. 1825 & in the 50th year of American Independence.*

“On the stone lay the silver cups with wine, corn and oil.

“The ceremonies commenced by the Morning Service, read emphatically by the Rev. Mr. Searle of the Episcopal church. “Before Jehovah’s awful Throne,” was sung by the choir to the tune of Old Hundred.—Morning Prayer.—First Lesson from Jeremiah, xxxi.—Second Lesson, Zeph. iii. 8. Psalms for the occasion, xcvi., xcvi., xcix., c.; Ps. cxxvii. in verse.—Ante-Communion Service.—Psalm in Hebrew.—Benediction.

“Mr. Noah rose and pronounced a discourse, or rather delivered a speech, announcing the re-organization of the Jewish government, and going through a detail of many points of intense interest, to which a crowded auditory listened with profound attention. At the conclusion of the ceremonies, the procession returned to the Lodge, and the Masonic brethren and the Military repaired to the Eagle Tavern and partook of refreshments. The church was filled with ladies, and the whole ceremony was impressive and unique. A grand salute of twenty-four guns was fired by the Artillery, and the band played a number of patriotic airs.

“We learn that a vast concourse assembled at Tonawanda, expecting that the ceremonies would be at Grand Island. Many of them came up in carriages, in time to hear the Inaugural speech. The following is the Proclamation, which will be read with great attention and interest. A finer day and more general satisfaction has not been known on any similar occasion.

#### PROCLAMATION TO THE JEWS.

“*Whereas*, it has pleased Almighty God to manifest to his chosen people the approach of that period, when, in fulfillment of the promises made to the race of Jacob, and as a reward for their pious constancy and triumphant fidelity, they are to be gathered from the four quarters of the globe, and to resume their rank and character among the governments of the earth: *And, Whereas*, the peace which now prevails among civilized nations, the progress of learning throughout the world, and the general spirit of liberality and toleration which exists, together with other changes favorable to light and to liberty, mark, in an especial manner, the approach of that time, when ‘peace on earth and good will to man,’ are to prevail with a benign and extended influence, and the ancient people of God, the first to proclaim his



unity and omnipotence, are to be restored to their inheritance, and enjoy the rights of a sovereign, independent people: *Therefore*, I, Mordecai Manuel Noah, Citizen of the United States of America, late Consul of said States for the City and Kingdom of Tunis, High Sheriff of New York, Counselor at Law, and, by the grace of God, Governor and Judge of Israel, have issued this my Proclamation, announcing to the Jews throughout the world, that an asylum is prepared and hereby offered to them, where they can enjoy that peace, comfort and happiness, which have been denied them through the intolerance and misgovernment of former ages. An asylum in a free and powerful country, where ample protection is secured to their persons, their property, and religious rights; an asylum in a country remarkable for its vast resources, the richness of its soil, and the salubrity of its climate; where industry is encouraged, education promoted, and good faith rewarded. 'A land of milk and honey,' where Israel may repose in peace, under his 'vine and fig tree;' and where our people may so familiarize themselves with the science of government and the lights of learning and civilization, as may qualify them for that great and final restoration to their ancient heritage, which the times so powerfully indicate.

"The asylum referred to is in the State of New York; the greatest State in the American confederacy. New York contains forty-three thousand two hundred and fourteen square miles; divided into fifty-five counties, and having six hundred and eighty-seven post-towns and cities, containing one million five hundred thousand inhabitants, together with six million acres of cultivated land, improvements in agriculture and manufactures, in trade and commerce, which include a valuation of three hundred millions of dollars of taxable property. One hundred and fifty thousand militia, armed and equipped; a constitution founded upon an equality of rights, having no test-oaths, and recognizing no religious distinctions, and seven thousand free-schools and colleges, affording the blessings of education to four hundred thousand children. Such is the great and increasing State to which the emigration of the Jews is directed.

"The desired spot in the State of New York to which I hereby invite my beloved people throughout the world, in common with those of every religious denomination, is called Grand Island, and on which I shall lay the foundation of a City of Refuge, to be called ARARAT.

"Grand Island in the Niagara river, is bounded by Ontario on the north, and Erie on the south, and within a few miles of each of those great commercial lakes. The island is nearly twelve miles in length, and varying from three to seven miles in breadth, and contains upwards of seventeen thousand acres of remarkably rich and fertile land. Lake Erie is about two hundred and seventy miles in length, and borders on the States of New

York, Pennsylvania and Ohio; and, westwardly, by the possessions of our friends and neighbors, the British subjects of Upper Canada. This splendid lake unites itself, by means of navigable rivers, with Lakes St. Clair, Huron, Michigan and Superior, embracing a lake shore of nearly three thousand miles; and by short canals those vast sheets of water will be connected with the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, thereby establishing a great and valuable internal trade to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico. Lake Ontario, on the north, is one hundred and ninety miles in length, and empties into the St. Lawrence; which, passing through the Province of Lower Canada, carries the commerce of Quebec and Montreal to the Atlantic Ocean.

“Thus fortified to the right and left by the extensive commercial resources of the Great Lakes and their tributary streams, within four miles of the sublime Falls of Niagara, affording the greatest water-power in the world for manufacturing purposes,—directly opposite the mouth of the Grand Canal of three hundred and sixty miles inland navigation to the Hudson river and city of New York,—having the fur trade of Upper Canada to the west, and also of the great territories towards the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean; likewise the trade of the Western States of America,—Grand Island may be considered as surrounded by every commercial, manufacturing and agricultural advantage, and from its location is pre-eminently calculated to become, in time, the greatest trading and commercial depot in the new and better world. To men of worth and industry it has every substantial attraction: the capitalist will be enabled to employ his resources with undoubted profit, and the merchant cannot fail to reap the reward of enterprise in a great and growing republic; but to the industrious mechanic, manufacturer and agriculturist, it holds forth great and improving advantages.

“Deprived, as our people have been for centuries, of a right in the soil, they will learn, with peculiar satisfaction, that here they can till the land, reap the harvest, and raise the flocks which are unquestionably their own; and, in the full and unmolested enjoyment of their religious rights, and of every civil immunity, together with peace and plenty, they can lift up their voice in gratitude to Him who sustained our fathers in the wilderness, and brought us in triumph out of the land of Egypt; who assigned to us the safe-keeping of his oracles, who proclaimed us his people, and who has ever walked before us like a ‘cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night.’

“In His name do I revive, renew and re-establish the government of the Jewish Nation, under the auspices and protection of the constitution and laws of the United States of America; confirming and perpetuating all our rights and privileges,—our name, our rank, and our power among the nations of the earth,—as they existed and were recognized under the government of the JUDGES. And I hereby enjoin it upon all our pious and venerable Rabbis,



our Presidents and Elders of Synagogues, Chiefs of Colleges, and brethren in authority throughout the world, to circulate and make known this my Proclamation, and give to it full publicity, credence and effect.

“It is my will that a census of the Jews throughout the world be taken, and returns of persons, together with their age and occupation, be registered in the archives of the Synagogues where they are accustomed to worship, designating such, in particular, as have been and are distinguished in the useful arts, in science, or in knowledge.

“Those of our people who, from age, local attachment, or from any other cause, prefer remaining in the several parts of the world which they now respectively inhabit, and who are treated with liberality by the public authorities, are permitted to do so, and are specially recommended to be faithful to the governments which protect them. It is, however, expected, that they will aid and encourage the emigration of the young and enterprising, and endeavor to send to this country such, as will add to our national strength and character, by their industry, honor and patriotism.

“Those Jews who are in the military employment of the different sovereigns of Europe, are enjoined to keep in their ranks until further orders, and conduct themselves with bravery and fidelity.

“I command that a strict neutrality be observed in the pending wars between the Greeks and the Turks, enjoined by considerations of safety towards a numerous population of Jews now under the oppressive dominion of the Ottoman Porte.

“The annual gifts which, for many centuries, have been afforded to our pious brethren in our Holy City of Jerusalem (to which may God speedily restore us), are to continue with unabated liberality; our seminaries of learning and institutions of charity in every part of the world are to be increased, in order that wisdom and virtue may permanently prevail among the chosen people.

“I abolish forever polygamy among the Jews, which, without religious warrant, still exists in Asia and Africa. I prohibit marriages or giving *Keduchim* without both parties are of a suitable age, and can read and write the language of the country which they respectively inhabit, and which I trust will ensure for their offspring the blessings of education, and, probably, the lights of science.

“Prayers shall forever be said in the Hebrew language; but it is recommended that occasional discourses on the principles of the Jewish faith and the doctrines of morality generally, be delivered in the language of the country; together with such reforms, which, without departing from the ancient faith, may add greater solemnity to our worship.

“The Caraites and Samaritan Jews, together with the black Jews of India

and Africa, and likewise those in Cochin China, and the sect on the coast of Malabar, are entitled to an equality of rights and religious privileges, as are all who may partake of the great Covenant, and obey and respect the Mosai-cal laws.

“The Indians of the American continent, in their admitted Asiatic origin,—in their worship of one God,—in their dialect and language,—in their sacrifices, marriages, divorces, burials, fastings, purifications, punishments, cities of refuge, division of tribes,—in their High Priests,—in their wars and in their victories, being, in all probability, the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel, which were carried captive by the King of Assyria, measures will be adopted to make them sensible of their origin, to cultivate their minds, soften their condition and finally re-unite them with their brethren the chosen people.

“A capitation tax of three shekels in silver, *per annum*, or one Spanish dollar, is hereby levied upon each Jew throughout the world, to be collected by the Treasurers of the different congregations, for the purpose of defraying the various expenses of re-organizing the government, of aiding emigrants in the purchase of agricultural implements, providing for their immediate wants and comforts, and assisting their families in making their first settlements; together with such free-will offerings as may be generously made in the furtherance of the laudable objects connected with the restoration of the people and the glory of the Jewish nation. A Judge of Israel shall be chosen once in every four years by the Consistory at Paris, at which time proxies from every congregation shall be received.

“I do hereby name as Commissioners, the most learned and pious Abraham de Cologna, Knight of the Iron Crown of Lombardy, Grand Rabbi of the Jews, and President of the Consistory at Paris; likewise the Grand Rabbi Andrade of Bordeaux; and also our learned and esteemed Grand Rabbis of the German and Portugal Jews, in London, Rabbis Herschell and Mendola; together with the Honorable Aaron Nunez Cardoza, of Gibraltar, Abraham Busnac, of Leghorn, Benjamin Gradis, of Bordeaux, Dr. E. Gans and Professor Zuntz, of Berlin, and Dr. Leo Woolf of Hamburgh; to aid and assist in carrying into effect the provisions of this my proclamation, with powers to appoint the necessary agents in the several parts of the world, and to establish Emigration societies, in order that the Jews may be concentrated and capacitated to act as a distinct body, having at the head of each kingdom or republic such presiding officers as I shall upon their recommendation appoint. Instructions to these my Commissioners shall be forthwith transmitted; and a more enlarged and general view of plan, motives and objects will be detailed in the address to the nation. The Consistory at Paris is hereby authorized and empowered to name three discreet persons of com



petent abilities, to visit the United States, and make such report to the nation as the actual condition of this country shall warrant.

“ I do appoint Roshodes Adar, February 7th, 1826, to be observed with suitable demonstrations as a day of Thanksgiving to the Lord God of Israel, for the manifold blessings and signal protection which he has deigned to extend to his people, and in order that on that great occasion our prayers may be offered for the continuance of his divine mercy and the fulfillment of all the promises and pledges made to the race of Jacob.

“ I recommend peace and union among us; charity and good-will to all; toleration and liberality to our brethren of every religious denomination, enjoined by the mild and just precepts of our holy religion; honor and good faith in the fulfillment of all our contracts; together with temperance, economy and industry in our habits.

“ I humbly intreat to be remembered in your prayers; and, lastly and most earnestly, I do enjoin you to ‘ Keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes and his commandments and his judgments and his testimonies, as it is written in the laws of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself.’

“ Given at Buffalo, in the State of New York, this second day of Tizri, in the year of the World, 5586, corresponding with the fifteenth day of September, 1825, and in the fiftieth year of American Independence.

“ By the Judge,

“ A. B. SIEXAS,

Secretary *pro tem.*”

The day succeeding the ceremonies,—the “corn and wine and oil,” and “the Proclamation,”—the newly constituted Judge in Israel issued another address (also printed in the *Buffalo Patriot, Extra*), setting forth the design of the new city, and invoking the aid and countenance of his brethren abroad, in contributing of their substance and influence to its uprising and population. Thus, with due benediction, ended the ceremonial—the first of its kind known in this country—of the corner-stone of an anticipated Hebrew, or any other city, being laid on the communion-table of a Christian church!

The ceremonial, with its procession, “masonic and military,” its pomp and magnificence, passed away. Major Noah, a day or two afterwards, departed for his home in New York; the “corner-stone” was taken from the audience-chamber of the

church, and deposited against its rear wall, outside; and the great prospective city of Ararat, with its splendid predictions and promises, vanished, "and, like an insubstantial pageant faded,—left not a rack behind."

This was, in fact, the whole affair. The foreign Rabbis denounced Noah and his entire scheme. He had levied taxes of sundry "shekels" on all the Jewish tribes of the world; assumed supreme jurisdiction over their emigration to America, and sought to control their destinies afterwards. But, having no confidence in his plans or financial management, the American Jews, even, repudiated his proceedings; and, after a storm of ridicule heaped on his presumptuous head, the whole thing died away, and passed among the other thousand-and-one absurdities of other character which had preceded it. Noah, however, with his ever-ready wit, and newspaper at hand, replied to all the jeers and flings in good humor, and lost none of the prestige of his character and position, either politically or morally. He was known to be eccentric in many things, and this was put down as the climax of his eccentricities. Poor in money, always, he had no influence in financial circles, yet he was a "power" in the State. Some years after his Ararat affair he held the office of Judge in one of the criminal city courts of New York, with decided acceptance to the public,—married a wealthy Jewess of high respectability,—reared a family, and died some ten or a dozen years ago in New York, lamented by those who best knew him, as a kind and generous man.

The subsequent history of the corner-stone which we have described, is imperfectly known. It is generally supposed, by those who have heard of the matter at all, that Ararat was actually founded on Grand Island, opposite Tonawanda; and, some thirty years ago, accounts were frequently published by tourists and in the newspapers, that the stone aforesaid stood, encased in a monument, on the actual spot selected by Noah for the building of his city. That the stone did so stand, in a



brick monument at Grand Island, opposite Tonawanda, but not on the site of any city, past or present, is a fact; and it came about in this wise: In the summer of the year 1827, having become a resident of Buffalo in April of that year, I saw the stone leaning against the rear underpinning of the little church of St. Paul, next to Pearl street. It had stood there from the time it was removed at its consecration in 1825. When it was removed from the wall of the church, I cannot say. In the year 1833, I made a purchase of Messrs. Samuel Leggett, of New York, Yates and McIntyre, of Albany, and Peter Smith, of Schenectady, and a few other parties, on behalf of a company of gentlemen in Boston, Massachusetts, with whom I had an interest, of the lands they held on Grand Island; amounting in all to about sixteen thousand acres. The average price paid for it was a little more than five dollars per acre. The principal object of the purchase was the valuable white-oak ship-timber abounding there, which it was intended to cut and convey to the Boston ship-yards.

A clearing and settlement was made on the island, opposite Tonawanda. Several houses were built, and a steam-mill for sawing the timber into plank, erected. A few months after the purchase, in the year 1834, being one day at the house of General Peter B. Porter, at Black Rock, I saw Major Noah's corner-stone lying in his lawn near the river front of his dwelling. In answer to my question, how it came there, he said, that being in New York some few years previous, and meeting Major Noah, with whom he had been long acquainted, he told him that his corner-stone of Ararat was standing behind St. Paul's church in Buffalo. Noah then requested him to take care of it, and place it in some secure spot, as he wished to have it preserved where it would not excite comment; for he had heard quite enough about it. In compliance with the request, General Porter took the stone, and placed it in his own grounds. Taking a fancy to the stone, I asked General Porter to give it to me, assuring him that I would take it to Grand

Island, and give it an honorable position. He complied with my request, and I removed it to the new settlement on the island. A decent architectural structure of brick was erected, standing about fourteen feet high and six feet square. A niche was made in the front, facing the river, in which the stone was placed; and a comely roof, as a top finish, put over it. A steam passenger-boat was running for several years, daily, through the summer, between Buffalo and the Falls of Niagara, touching each way at Whitehaven, the little Grand Island settlement; and many people went on shore to see the monument, which told a false history. Artists and tourists sketched the homely little structure, and copied the inscription on the stone; and the next year a *Guide Book to the Falls of Niagara*, issued in Buffalo by a young man named Ferris, I believe, had the monument, with the "Corner-stone of the Jewish City of Ararat," well engraved and described, conspicuous in its pages. That, of course, was sufficient authority for the general belief that the City of Ararat was founded on that spot by Mordecai Manuel Noah.

The mill was taken down about the year 1850; and the monument becoming time-worn and dilapidated, was taken down also. We had no Historical Society in Buffalo then, and although the stone was my property, I had become careless of its possession; and, soon afterwards, Mr. Wallace Baxter, who owned a farm a couple of miles above Whitehaven on the river shore, took the stone and carried it to his place. By this removal, the farm of Mr. Baxter—taking the stone as authority—became as much the site of Ararat as Whitehaven had been. In the year 1864, the late Mr. Charles H. Waite, of this city, opened a watering-place—"Sheenwater"—on the opposite, or Canadian side of the island, and Mr. Baxter carried the stone over there for the delectation of the visitors who congregated to that resort,—thus establishing another locality of the renowned Ararat. Mr. Waite's house having burned a few months after the stone was removed there, he carefully placed it in an



out-house on the premises, where it remained until the last summer, when I obtained his leave to take it again into my possession, which I did, and deposited it on my farm at the head of Grand Island, one of the original tracts of land which Mr. Leggett had purchased for Major Noah. There, too, had the traveling public seen it, might have been located another site for the Hebrew city. A short time afterwards I had the stone taken to my premises on Niagara street, in this city; the same to which General Porter, then owning them, had removed it, previous to the year 1834. A few weeks later it was again—and, I trust, finally—removed, and, on the second day of January, in the year 1866, deposited in the official room of the Buffalo Historical Society, where it is duly honored with a conspicuous position against its eastern wall; leaving the Hebrew “City of Ararat” a myth—never having existence, save in the prurient imagination of its projector, a record of which the tablet bears.

Like the dove which went out from the ark of his great patriarchal progenitor, the stone of the later Noah has come back to its domicil, not in the ark, but to the city which, in its embryo existence, first gave it shelter and protection; and, we trust,—unlike the dove,—to again go out no more. Just forty years from its exodus from the communion-table of the church of St. Paul, like the Children of ancient Israel, has this eventful stone—meantime crossing, not the parted waters of the Red Sea, but the transparent waters of the Niagara, resting by the wayside, and traveling through the wilderness in circuitous wanderings—found its home in the rooms of the Buffalo Historical Society.

Thus ends the strange, eventful history of Major Noah, his Hebrew city and its corner-stone. Although that portion of the public, away from Buffalo, who ever heard anything of this modern Ararat, have believed, since the year 1825, that Major Noah actually purchased Grand Island, and founded his city, and laid his corner-stone upon it, the fact is, that he never

owned an acre of its land, nor founded the city, nor laid a corner-stone *there*. Nor have I been able, after diligent inquiry, to ascertain that he ever set foot on the island. I have heard sundry traditions, lately, of his going there at the time he visited Buffalo in the year 1825. All these were contradictory, and partially guess-work; no one, so far as I have ascertained, ever saw him there. Thus, that point may be considered as definitely settled.

The story of "Ararat" will hardly be complete without the account of a queer old Irishman named Denison, who, with his family, about the year 1820, had "squatted" on one of Mr. Leggett's lots, on the head of Grand Island, near the mouth of Beaver creek,—now comprising a part of the pleasant grounds of "Falconwood,"—which I laid out on the river shore as a watering-place, some years ago, and since disposed of to a company of gentlemen in this city.

When Major Noah came to Buffalo to found his city, the old gentleman hearing of it, and supposing he really owned the land, came up to Buffalo to see him. He told the Major that he lived on his land, and that he had invented a "perpetual motion;" and if he would let him occupy it for his lifetime, he would give him the right to use his invaluable mechanical power, which, beyond all doubt, would make his, the Major's, fortune. Noah good-naturedly told him that he then had no time to investigate the merits of his discovery, but that he might continue to stay on the land, and when he had time to look into it, he would determine the matter. So it rested, and the credulous old man supposed, and so claimed, that from that time the land was to be his own.

When I took possession of the island lands, as agent of the new proprietors, I told Denison that he must give me possession of the ground he occupied; that I had no wish to drive him off forcibly, but would let him remain, without payment of rent, until he could find a home elsewhere within a reasonable time. But he was disposed to do no such thing. He had



made a contract with Major Noah for his "perpetual motion," but was willing to allow me the same privilege that he had extended to him, and insisted on its performance! Being somewhat skeptical as to the utility of his "motion," I declined the proposition, but, to gratify him, would look at it. With a great deal of circumlocution in its description, he produced a little section of a piece of wood about four inches in diameter, circular in form, flat on its sides, about one inch thick on one disc, and tapering to a quarter of an inch thick on the opposite disc, and a hole of half an inch thick through the center, through which he ran a stick on which it could revolve. Then he put the thick side of the disc vertically into a dish of water, and holding on to each end of the stick or journal, the block forthwith revolved half way round out of the water, and letting the thin edge take its place when it stopped—the thin edge in the water, and the thick one out. That was his "perpetual motion!" He declared his discovery complete; nor would he give it up, but insisted on retaining the land. After waiting a year or more, he would listen to no terms, and a suit of ejectment was commenced against him in the Supreme Court. The late Thomas T. Sherwood defended him, brought his "motion" into court, talked to the jury as though he believed in it, and insisted on the fulfillment of the "contract," as he pleased to call it. It is needless to say that Denison lost his suit, and obstinately refused to leave the place until the sheriff forcibly put him out of possession,—at an expense to the plaintiff of nearly two hundred dollars.

As no patent for that notable invention was ever obtained, and some of the present proprietors of Falconwood are extensively engaged in manufacturing, where motive power is costly to them, I will, at any time they wish it, with great pleasure, give them a model of the discovery.

3261





ORLANDO ALLEN.

ARTOTYPE, W. J. BAKER, BUFFALO, N. Y.

# ORLANDO ALLEN.

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GLIMPSES OF LIFE IN THE VILLAGE OF BUFFALO.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, APRIL 16, 1877.

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BY WILLIAM C. BRYANT.

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I HAVE undertaken to write for the Buffalo Historical Society a sketch of the life and character of Orlando Allen. When it was first proposed to me, I accepted the task in the light of a grateful duty. I loved, admired and revered the man. From the first, the magnetism of his nature attracted and held my sympathies. Besides, he shared my enthusiasm in a special field of research, which has little popular attraction. When that hasty consent was irrevocably given, I had time to reflect how ill-fitted I was to furnish a truthful portrait of the man—to give a just estimate of what he was, and what he did, and what influence he exerted upon the community among which he lived and labored for more than half a century.

The best that I could do in the time at my disposal, and laboring under the disadvantages at which I have hinted, is, with many misgivings, offered to you to-night, and I pray your most charitable judgment upon the manner in which I have executed the task.

I have had the aid of a considerable mass of manuscript penned by Mr. Allen, which he left, a priceless legacy, to his



posterity and to this Society, which, I presume, is ultimately to become the custodian of them. Aside from this, the memories of our older citizens are stored with racy, characteristic anecdotes of the man; and the difficulty under which I have labored, has been to determine the proper limitations of a paper, which, at best, can be expected to furnish but a sketchy outline of the features of its subject, rather than an elaborately wrought portrait.

The progenitors of Mr. Allen were among the earliest settlers of New England. His grandparents, Gideon Allen and Lettuce Curtess, migrated from the town of Adams in the state of Vermont, into New Hartford, Oneida county, New York, shortly after the close of the revolutionary war, bringing with them a family of hardy, Green Mountain youths—seven boys and one daughter. His mother's parents, Amos Lee and Anna Camp, came from Hartford county, Connecticut, into New Hartford about the same time, bringing with them three sons and four daughters, the youngest of whom, Sarah, was afterwards Mr. Allen's mother. Sarah Lee and Eli Allen married in 1797.

Orlando Allen, the subject of this sketch, was born in New Hartford, according to the record in the old family Bible, on the tenth day of February, 1803. His father's family continued to reside in that place until the spring of 1820, when they removed to the village of Fredonia, Chautauqua county, New York; but, during the previous year, Orlando had anticipated the hegira of the family, and had been sent to Buffalo to study the science of medicine in the office of Doctor Cyrenius Chapin, an early and life-long friend of the family. It is not to be presumed that, in the sixteen years intervening between his birth and his induction into the mysteries of the medical art, as taught by the redoubtable Doctor Chapin, Orlando had enjoyed many advantages of education. In truth, his opportunities of becoming learned were exceeding meagre; but, to make amends for what he lacked in this particular, he possessed remarkably alert receptive faculties, as well as a fondness for reading, which

went far to compensate for the want of educational training and discipline.

Doctor Chapin had come westward in 1801, to arrange for the reception of a small colony of immigrants,—Orlando Allen's father among the number,—but the embryo city and the virgin country surrounding it were in no condition to offer them even the rudest hospitality. Doctor Chapin himself was forced to seek a temporary abode on the more civilized Canadian banks of the Niagara, where he sojourned for nearly three years, practicing his profession; but he removed to Buffalo some time in the year 1803. As soon as the surveyors employed by the Holland Land Company had mapped the wilderness at this point into inner and outer lots, and into streets and avenues, with formidable Dutch names, Doctor Chapin selected inner lot number forty, at the northwest corner of Main and Swan streets, as his future abode. Weed's Block and another brick store adjoining it,—which latter was erected by Orlando Allen,—cover the Main street front of this lot, which extended to Erie street. I will here quote from Mr. Allen's unfinished autobiography a description of Doctor Chapin's office and its surroundings.

“At the time I came to live with Doctor Chapin, his dwelling was on the northeast corner of Swan and Pearl streets; his office was on the second floor of a wooden one and one-half story building on the Main street front of his lot, near the north line; this was a small building, originally a dwelling house, the first floor of which was at this time occupied by a Mr. George Keese as a drug store. John Wilkeson, Esq., then a lad of about my age, was the sole clerk in this store.

“Our office, as I have said, was in the second story, reached by outside stairs starting from the ground on the south side of the building, rising and winding around to the back end, through which was the door of the office. Immediately in the rear of the store, and some fifteen or twenty feet from it, was a small frame barn, used for stabling the horse employed by the doctor in his professional rides, together with a Boston gig, cutter, etc. On the south of the store were some small one-story buildings, which occupied the remaining Main street front of the lot, with the exception of some six or eight feet left for a passage-way to the stairs leading to the office. These offices,



or small buildings, rested upon the front foundation wall of Doctor Chapin's dwelling, which was burned when Buffalo was destroyed by the British, in December, 1813. Behind them was a wide passage-way from Swan street to the barn which I have mentioned, large enough to form a very convenient and serviceable barn-yard. The office on the corner of Main and Swan streets was occupied by James Sheldon, Esq., the father of our present judge, Hon. James Sheldon. The one next north of it was occupied by Joseph W. Moulton, Esq., as a law office; the next one north, by J. Nash Bailey, Esq., a justice of the peace; and the remaining one, by the late James Sweeney, as a tailor's shop."

Doctor Chapin had at this time a partner, Doctor Congdon, originally from Connecticut, and another student besides Orlando Allen and Hiram Pratt, by the name of Wakelee, a fine, companionable young fellow, for whom Mr. Allen cherished feelings of warm affection. Doctor Chapin was, in truth, the most considerable personage in the village at this era. His gallant achievements and sacrifices in the second struggle for Independence, when he had exchanged his perilous drugs for the still deadlier implements of war, were fresh in every memory; and his brusque but honest ways, practical benevolence and sturdy character, won for him a place in the hearts of the pioneers of this region. He was a large landed proprietor, too,—owning no less than five extensive farms—and his professional services were sought throughout a vast region, lapping far over into the heart of Canada, and extending as far south as Erie. When it is remembered that these visits were accomplished on horseback, and that there were no macadam or plank roads in those days, the arduous nature of the doctor's professional duties will be easier comprehended. The keeping of the doctor's accounts, among other multiform duties, devolved upon Orlando. Returning from his weary all-day's ride, the doctor, after partaking of some slight refreshment, and cleansing his apparel from the stains of travel, would repair to the office, fill his comfortable pipe with tobacco, and surrounding himself with a cloud of fragrance, would tell off his professional calls and services, and the same would be jotted

down into a book by the student. A formidable array of figures it would make, but, alas, no alchemy could transfuse the mass of these accounts into hard money or its equivalent. The country was wretchedly poor, and the good doctor must needs be content with what the gratitude of his richer patients impelled them to requite him.

It is not difficult to imagine what kind of a youth Orlando was at this period. Sprung from Puritan ancestry, there was still a dash of the cavalier in his composition; and the union of these opposite traits in one nature, made him the gallant, dauntless, hard-working and ingenuous lad that he was. There are, or were a few years ago, many well-attested legends current among the older class of our citizens, illustrating the love of adventure and heroic disregard of danger which characterized him at this period.

It may be gravely questioned, whether the youthful Orlando was a diligent reader of the dozen or so of medical works which constituted his master's library. He had no strong predilection for the medical science. His genius was rather administrative than contemplative; and, in a field like Buffalo, where so little had been done to subdue savage nature, and where there was yet so much to do, his joyous, healthful, manly spirit rebelled at confinement, and would do battle with the difficulties around him. Accordingly, we soon find him relieving the doctor of a large portion of the labor and cares that lay outside of his professional duties. He kept the doctor's accounts, made his collections, superintended his farming operations, gathered and drew to the house such farm produce as the wants of the household required, and kept a vigilant eye on all the doctor's interests. Orlando did all this the more willingly, since the doctor had, from the first, generously assumed the whole expense of boarding and clothing the lad, without remuneration from his father.

It will be borne in mind, that, at this period, Buffalo was little more than a rude hamlet,—that the forest-circle which girded



it was unbroken save by the silver clasp of Lake Erie. Out of this sunless barrier of woods, the red deer would occasionally emerge to crop the grass that stretched a carpet of verdure along the edge of the clearing. Often, in those days, the woodland solitudes threw back on the listening settlement the echo of Miles Jones' rifle, as it rang the death-knell of these wary and beautiful visitors.

Society in the village then displayed that charming simplicity and equality which characterize pioneer settlements. The virtue of hospitality was universally practiced, and the hearts of the villagers were knit together by ties that sprang from their isolation and unity of interests. The good doctor's mansion was the resort of all kinds of graceless vagabonds, who were never turned away naked or hungry. Aside from these random visitors a few strange characters quartered themselves in the doctor's habitation, as perennial boarders and lodgers, under the shallow pretense of rendering some helpful service in his household. Among them was a thin, long-legged Yankee, a mighty man at the trencher, but a living negation of the fabled thrift and industry of his race; an Irishman, sadly addicted to punch, but overflowing with that rollicking humor which gilds with sunshine the humblest pathway; and an oracular negro, known as "Old Jack," who never tired of recounting how he witnessed the throwing overboard of that historic tea in Boston harbor, and how, as a good stout lad, he saw the seven martyred patriots fall, beneath the fire of Major Pitcairn's soldiery, at the outbreak of the revolutionary war.

Aside from the usual motley population of a frontier town, the village was skirted on one side by the hunting grounds of the Seneca and other Iroquois Indians, whose villages dotted the banks of Buffalo creek and its tributary streams. This ancient and warlike race, with the renowned Red Jacket at its head, still assumed sovereignty over a broad region of country, and had abated little of the pride and truculence which had characterized the Six Nations when at the zenith of their

power. Drunkenness and kindred vices, introduced by the pale-faces, had, however, begun their baleful work among them.

During the first three years of his residence in Buffalo, young Allen witnessed what threatened to be a bloody collision between this waning aboriginal power and the white authorities of Western New York. So-ongise, or Tommy Jemmy, armed with the unwritten decree of the Seneca Council, had put to death a squaw named Kauquatau, who had been convicted, by that tribunal, of witchcraft. The Indian executioner was arrested by process of law, and immured in the white man's dungeon. This invasion of their national prerogatives alarmed and incensed the haughty Senecas. The morning after his arrest, the common near the northeast corner of Main and Swan streets was covered with a multitude of armed and scowling warriors. Among them was Sagoyewatha, or Red Jacket, who addressed them in a fervid speech, attacking the whites with fierce invective, and lashing the Indians into fury by his artful and fiery eloquence. A massacre seemed imminent, but just then the tall form of Captain Pollard was seen moving through the multitude. Commanding silence by a gesture, he urged the assembled warriors, in a temperate and eloquent speech, to disperse to their homes, and remain quiescent until an appeal to the white man's law and sense of justice should prove ineffectual. His voice was obeyed. The subsequent trial and acquittal of Tommy Jemmy were a triumph to Red Jacket, and a vindication of the assailed sovereignty of the Seneca Nation.

Doctor Chapin was immensely popular with these ancient lords of the soil; for, aside from his prestige as a great medicine-man, his valorous exploits in the late war with England were known to them, and were a title to the red man's homage. As a proof of their liking, they bestowed upon him the monopoly of their patronage, and dubbed him "Ah-ta-gis," the doctor. Dr. Chapin, in treating his red patients, experienced great embarrassment from his ignorance of their language, of which he was



never able to master a sentence. He accordingly instructed Orlando, among his other duties, to make himself sufficiently acquainted with the Seneca dialect to qualify him for the office of interpreter. There is something mysterious and fascinating about these unwritten, aboriginal tongues; and Orlando prosecuted the task of acquiring the Seneca with a diligence and zeal that overcame all obstacles, and were rewarded with a complete triumph. Thenceforward, in the absence of the great white medicine-man, Orlando was constrained to prescribe for the minor ailments of these children of the woods, and waxed deft and bold in wielding the turnkeys and the thumb-screw lancet. But greatness in any field of human exertion is purchased at the price of many failures. Our hero's first essay with the lancet, a ragged-edged affair,—laid up Conjockety in his cabin, opposite Farmer's Point, for three months, and nearly cost that mighty hunter his life. This unlucky misadventure entailed on Doctor Chapin many a visit to Conjockety's wigwam; but Orlando was not chided by the doctor, nor did he lose the friendship of his Indian victim.

The Indians delighted in being bled. They regarded it as a sovereign remedy, especially for the bad blood engendered by dissipation. They rarely came singly to have this operation performed, but in families and groups. On one occasion, soon after the Conjockety mishap, on a warm summer afternoon, a party of nine natives repaired to the office and asked to be bled. The doctor was "over the hills and far away," and Orlando must needs act in his place. Seating the nine dusky patients on a bench which stood in a passage-way alongside the office, he bared and ligatured the arm of each individual, and then gallantly applied the lancet to each in turn. Opening a vein was a very small operation, but bandaging the bleeding member required care, and involved considerable delay. When all were bleeding finely, he commenced with the one first bled, and carefully enveloped his arm with the necessary wrappings. Before he got through, however, the head of the column began

to waver, the loss of blood was excessive, and the wounded sought the support of mother earth, in a state of insensibility. It required considerable exertion to resuscitate the sufferers, but this was achieved at length, and no irreparable damage was done. Mr. Allen had an inexhaustible fund of anecdotes of this description, which he would relate in terse, graphic language, and which his powers of mimicry and dramatic action rendered irresistible. But it must not be imagined that young Allen had an eye only to the humorous aspect of Indian character. He had a sensitive, warm heart,—the poetic insight that was quick to discern the pathos that lurked behind this incongruous mask. Whatever was strange, picturesque and noble in the character and habits of these children of the woods, at once arrested his attention. He recognized his brotherhood to them, and regarded them with a strange, yearning interest, as a wronged and doomed people, soon to pass away forever from the earth. He eagerly sought to acquaint himself not only with their perishing language, but with their fading customs and traditions. Scattered among the Indians were a number of white captives—Indians in all but features and complexion—who had been torn from desolated hearths during the old French and revolutionary wars. The narratives of the lives of these unfortunates outrival the creations of poetry and romance. At all times during Mr. Allen's boyhood days, the Indians were seen in greater numbers on the streets of Buffalo than the whites; but for a week during each year they congregated in large numbers to meet the United States Indian agent, Jasper Parrish, and the United States interpreter, Horatio Jones. Both of these gentlemen had been Indian captives, had been brought up to manhood in Indian wigwams, and were, therefore, thoroughly conversant with the language, customs and character of the Iroquois. The occasion of these yearly meetings with the aborigines, the grave councils held with plumed and painted sachems, the distribution of annuities and presents, diversified by Indian games, races and dances, gave a strange, picturesque aspect to village



life, a half century ago. Young Allen made the acquaintance of the principal chiefs and warriors, as well as captives, and eagerly listened to the stories related by the latter, of their eventful lives. The store where the Indian goods were housed, and where Jones and Parrish, with the chiefs and head men of the Indians, naturally resorted, was situated a few doors above Doctor Chapin's office. Here Jones, who had not imbibed the Indian habit of taciturnity, but delighted in social converse, would while away hour after hour in relating reminiscences of the past. From his own lips Orlando heard the narrative of his capture and his experience among the Indians, which is not surpassed in romantic interest in this whole department of literature. Far into the morning, seated around a cheerful fire, and soothed by pipes of the fragrant weed, these sessions were held, until young Allen's memory became a store-house of information, now so rare and inaccessible.

On one of these occasions, captive and captor,—the one in the pride of manhood, the other a bowed and wrinkled warrior,—suddenly confronted each other with silent, eager gaze, and then extended the grasp of amity over the dying fire. I will relate a single incident, culled from many which I have heard Mr. Allen relate with that rare colloquial grace and dramatic power that rendered his conversation so fascinating.

Many of the captives were among the first-fruits of missionary labors on the banks of the Buffalo creek. Among them was Thomas Armstrong, who served as interpreter to the missionaries, in the little chapel on the reservation. He was a thoughtful, exemplary man, but, like all the captives resident among the Indians, was wedded to their manner of life, and resolved to live and die among them. He was captured in Pennsylvania during the revolutionary war, but was so young at the time that the incident affected his imagination like a vague and troubled dream. When he arrived at manhood, an irresistible longing seized him, to revisit the home of his childhood and seek out his relatives, should any be living. He knew

that his father's name was Thomas Armstrong, and some wanderer from the region of the Susquehanna, when the captive had attained to manhood, brought the joyful tidings that Thomas had a sister still surviving there—the wife of an opulent farmer, the mother of blooming children, and the mistress of a happy home. With such information as he could glean from this stranger, the captive started out one morning from Buffalo creek, and, after a journey of several days' duration through an almost trackless wilderness, his eyes were greeted with the pleasant signs of civilization in the old settlements of Pennsylvania. He found with some difficulty the residence of his sister. With faltering steps and a throbbing heart he entered the house, and was greeted by a gentle, sweet-faced woman, who eyed him with compassion, but with a countenance which indicated no suspicion that the wild being before her was her long-lost brother. Armstrong took the chair that she proffered, without the power of uttering a word. She placed food before him, for he was haggard and almost famished, but the first morsel of bread nearly choked him. He could not eat, but watched with a yearning heart every motion of his sister as she caressed her children, or busied herself with her household duties. A spell was upon him, and he could not speak. He was but slightly acquainted with the English tongue, and he was dressed in the garb of an Indian. Would she acknowledge this wild man of the woods as her kindred,—her brother? Would not the revelation bring distress and humiliation to a home so happy and so blessed? His resolution was soon taken. With a simple gesture of thanks, and with a heart that was breaking, he left this hospitable roof without divulging his identity, and retraced his long and toilsome path to the Seneca village, on the banks of the Buffalo creek. The descendants of this captive at present reside on the Cattaraugus reservation, near Buffalo. The narratives of Jones' and Parrish's experiences among the Indians, teem with similar incidents of romantic and tragic interest.



There is little doubt that the brave young novice, Orlando Allen, would ultimately have achieved distinction, had his heart been wedded to the healing art.

It was the custom of the Indians to pierce one ear with sundry holes for the insertion of silver trinkets; and to slit the rim of the other, separating the skin from the cartilage the whole length, leaving it attached at the ends, and thus forming a long pendant loop, to which were attached gaily dyed birds' feathers, shells, and other ornaments. Not unfrequently, by accident, or in some affray, this loop would become broken, the ends dangling down to the shoulder. Quite often, also, the jewels in the pierced ear would in like manner be torn from their slight hold, leaving the member in a jagged and unsightly state.

"With ears in this condition," writes Orlando, "there came to the office one day an Indian, in great pain from a carious tooth, which he wished me to extract. This being accomplished, I called his attention to the unsightly appearance of his ears, and proposed to trim off the dangling ends and jagged points. To this he readily assented; so I got a scalpel, together with a basin of water and sponge, and commenced the operation of reducing his ears to proper shape. He bled like a butcher, but bore the pain without wincing. I saw him often afterwards, and sometimes joked him about his ears. They were in very good shape, but somewhat reduced in size."

Soon afterwards, his skill as a surgeon was put to a much severer test. A squaw from the Tonawanda Indian village was brought to the office, with a compound fracture of the right leg. It was evening when she arrived, and Doctor Chapin was absent, and was not expected to return until the following morning. Morning came, but the doctor came not; nor was there a physician to be found in the village or its vicinity. Inflammation set in, greatly increasing the difficulty of the operation. The case admitting of no further delay, Orlando doggedly addressed himself to the task, manufacturing the necessary splints and bandages, and set and dressed the limb. In about ten days she was brought back, with the dressings off and the injured limb in a most terrible condition. The

young surgeon again set the limb, and the suffering woman was sent off with many admonitions. To his utter amazement, within a week she was again brought to the office with the bandages and splints off from the leg, which was in a state but little removed from mortification. It seems she had been plied with whisky to assuage the pain, and in her drunken frenzy she had denuded her limb of splints and bandages. In the meantime, an artificial joint had been formed. Again Orlando manfully grappled with the case, and, after a tedious and painful operation, sent her home, her friends promising thereafter to watch the wretched woman night and day, and to desist from giving her alcoholic stimulants. Strange to say, she recovered; and, stranger yet, the broken limb grew to be as sound and symmetrical as its fellow.

There were few bearing fruit-trees in this region at this period, save clumps of the ruddy and golden Indian plum which here and there dotted the meadows. The neighboring settlements in Canada, however, which boasted of a higher antiquity, were provided with the common varieties of cultivated fruits. I will again quote from Mr. Allen's manuscript.

\* \* \* "It was in this same autumn (1820), that one day, while at dinner, the doctor said to his nephew, Gorham Chapin (who boarded with the family), and myself, that he was going over the river that afternoon after apples, and that he desired our assistance. We took a lot of bags in a wagon, and went down to Black Rock, intending to obtain a yawl-boat with which to cross the river. In this we were disappointed. We could find nothing better than a log canoe or 'dug-out.' Both Gorham and myself remonstrated against undertaking the passage of the river in such a frail craft, especially when loaded with bags of apples. The doctor insisted that it was safe, with good management, and we accordingly embarked, crossed and dropped down the river to the Wintermute place; where we obtained, I think, six bags of apples, which, when placed in the canoe, filled it completely from stem to stern.

"It was necessary, in order to reach the place of our departure, where our wagon was, to ascend the river nearly up to Colonel Kirby's mill, which stood some fifty or sixty rods above the present ferry. This we did by towing; Gorham and myself pulling at the rope, while the doctor sat astride of



a bag of apples, and kept the canoe off from the shore. When we arrived at the point of leaving the shore, and saw that the addition of our weight would sink the canoe nearly to the water's edge, both Gorham and myself again remonstrated, thinking it the height of temerity to hazard our lives in that way. Again were we overruled, and ordered into, or rather onto the canoe. With great reluctance we complied; not, however, until we had divested ourselves of shoes, stockings, and much of our clothing; feeling almost certain that the canoe would sink when we got into the fierce current, for her gunwales were not, certainly, much, if any, more than three inches above the water. Gorham said, 'Well, doctor, both Orlando and I can swim, and, in case of trouble, will, most likely, reach the shore; but you can't swim, therefore you must hang on to the paddles, as the canoe will doubtless sink.' I think the doctor had some misgivings himself, but we must recross the river, and the canoe was our only resource. With him, there was no such thing as 'back out;' and whatever were his doubts, he kept them to himself, and simply said, 'Now, boys, get on, and keep still. Don't stir, and I will take you safely across.' Each of us took a paddle to assist in preserving a balance; not in propelling the canoe, for that we were strictly forbidden to do, as a false motion when we were in the rapids might work mischief. I shall never forget how I felt as we put off from the shore. It was a balancing between fear, and confidence in the doctor. To our agreeable surprise, we did cross in safety; not, however, without imminent peril; for, more than once, while in the most rapid part of the current, my heart leaped into my mouth as it seemed that we were about to go under."

Our hardy pioneers thought little of such hazards, even where the prospective reward was less alluring than a few bags of apples. But we will let our hero tell his own story.

\* \* \* "The road by the way of the Indian reservation was much the shortest; but then there was the creek to ford, which was no easy matter with a load of hay on an ox sled. So, on my return, I took the one by the way of Abbott's Corners and the lake, taking the ice at Barker's; thence the track was a straight line to the old light-house.

"These oxen were a famous pair, old Dun and Bright, as they were named, not only for size and strength, but for their sterling qualities in other respects; quick to obey the word of command, gentle to ride when fording streams, etc. One could ride on a load behind them and manage them almost as well as he could a pair of horses with reins. I entered upon the ice not without some apprehensions, as it had been snowing the most of the day, and still continued. The track was fast becoming obliterated, and soon would be entirely, if it kept on snowing. After getting well out upon the ice I was

entirely out of sight of land. So thick was the atmosphere with the falling snow, that I must trust entirely to the sagacity of the oxen.

“After having gone on long enough, as I thought, to be somewhere in the neighborhood of the light-house, I began to peer about; peradventure I might get a glimpse of some familiar objects, and thus determine my whereabouts. All at once it stopped snowing,—the clouds broke away,—the sun shone full and clear, just above the horizon. To my utter amazement, I discovered, but a short distance before me, the open water, and my position far out towards the Canadian shore. I was not long in changing my course and reaching the shore near the mouth of the creek; thankful to have escaped the fate which might have befallen me had the storm continued.”

In the autumn of 1820, one William Keese, who occupied the first floor of the building in which Doctor Chapin's office was situated, had the misfortune to lose his wife by death, and thereupon determined to sell out his stock of goods and business, and return to his friends in the East. He made overtures to Doctor Chapin, who concluded to make the purchase, provided that Orlando and young Hiram Pratt would take turns in looking after the store, alternating one day in the store and one in the office. The young gentlemen were not averse to this proposition. Young Pratt, who did not diffuse his exertions over so wide a field as the ubiquitously useful Orlando, but grappled with the drug business solely, soon managed to become a partner in the concern, whose managers were thenceforth known to the world as the firm of Chapin & Pratt. When the circuit of the year was made, and an account of stock had been taken, to the surprise of all parties it was found that the net gains amounted to the munificent sum of one thousand eight hundred dollars. Young Pratt, elated with this success, effected an arrangement by which he purchased Doctor Chapin's interest in the store, and for a time carried on the business in his own name. But he could not manage to dispense with Orlando. The young men were attached to each other by the ties of friendship, and had mutually resolved in their confidential moods that they would unite their business interests as long as they lived. Orlando was three or four years Hiram's junior



and it was arranged that he should continue in the store as a clerk until he should arrive at his majority, and then be advanced to the dignity of junior partner in the house of Pratt & Allen.

It cost Orlando but a slight struggle to turn his back upon the profession which was his father's choice, and embark in a mercantile career. But, like the good son that he was, he made a point of first obtaining the consent of his parents to the change, and next respected the claims of gratitude, by seeking the approbation of Doctor Chapin. He succeeded in obtaining both, although the good doctor was regretful at losing so faithful and accomplished an assistant; and, with a light heart and many rose-colored visions of future affluence and dignities, Orlando became an embryo merchant.

I cannot better illustrate the indomitable spirit which early characterized Mr. Allen, than by quoting from his autobiography the following incident of life while an inmate of Doctor Chapin's family:

"In the autumn of 1820, the first agricultural fair ever held in what was then known as Niagara county, was held in the village of Buffalo. The ground selected for the fair was a small meadow, bordering the northerly side of Little Buffalo creek, now the Main and Hamburgh street canal. This meadow extended from a point a little east of Main street, to a point some distance east of where Washington street now is, and south of Crow, now Exchange street. It was all below what was then called the hill, being a smooth, level piece of green-sward well suited to the purpose.

"Doctor Chapin was the president of the agricultural society, and Joseph W. Moulton, Esq., the secretary. The doctor, as I have before stated, owned five farms; including one of the Hamburgh farms, then known as the Colton farm, but in later years as the Duel farm, situated about one mile south of Potter's Corners. It then contained somewhere in the neighborhood of three hundred acres of land. On it was kept a considerable amount of stock, consisting of brood mares, colts, and a stallion, an imported horse of very pure blood; also neat cattle and sheep.

"The two farms in Clarence were adjoining, and together contained somewhere from two hundred and fifty to three hundred acres. One of them fronted on the main stage road, a little east of Harris hill; the other on a

parallel road, their back ends lapping a little, so as to enable the occupants to go from one to the other without trespassing upon other lands. On these farms he had sheep. Desiring, of course, that the fair should be a success, he made early arrangements to have the pick of his herds and flocks, the products of the dairy and the loom, from his farms, ready for exhibition.

"It was a hobby with the doctor that all of his family should on that occasion be clothed in domestic manufactures, and, as far as possible, with material from his own farms. To that end, besides flannels, stockings, linen, etc., he had manufactured a piece of black cloth for the male members; also a piece of pressed woolen cloth, in which he intended his wife and daughter to be arrayed, instead of silks, etc. The persons in charge of his several farms were directed to have all things brought in the day before the fair, but, as the time drew near, the doctor began to have misgivings about the working of his plans in that respect, and desired me to take horses, and a boy he named, and proceed to the Colton farm in Hamburg, and see that all the stock which he had designated was forthcoming.

"I arrived at the farm on the morning of the day preceding the fair, when I found that nothing had been done in the premises. I told the man in charge, that if he would get the old merino ram down, I would be responsible for all the rest. So, with the aid of the boy, I started with not less than twenty head of stock of all descriptions, to lead and drive some fourteen miles; and every rod of it, after the first two miles, without a fence along the road, and through woods the most of the way, across the Indian reservation. After many attempts on the part of the loose cattle to turn back, and long chases through the woods, we finally got them all safely here in Buffalo, and shut up in the barn-yard. We came in about three o'clock P. M., and while I was relating to Doctor Chapin the arrangements about the old ram, up came the man who was to bring him, minus the ram. It was impossible to make him lead, and there being no means of conveying him, he was obliged to let him go back. A nephew of the doctor's, Gorham Chapin, a young law student who was present, seeing the doctor's great disappointment, for this was the finest animal of the kind he had, proposed to take a small wagon we had, and go for the ram and bring him in that night. While getting my dinner, the doctor said to me, that he had heard nothing from his sheep, which were to come from the farms in Clarence, although he had, early in the morning, dispatched a special messenger to see to them. I told him to give himself no further uneasiness about them; that I would see to it that they were here on time. He put his hand in his pocket, pulled out some silver change, which he handed me, and said he did not like to ask me to go, nevertheless he would be much gratified to see the sheep. About four o'clock, I mounted a fresh horse and rode for Clarence.



On the way, I met the messenger who had been sent out in the morning, returning without having made any arrangement by which the sheep would be forthcoming. I had him turn and go back with me. We arrived at the Harris hill farm about dark, and found the delinquent farmer sitting before the fire, waiting for his supper. I told him how Doctor Chapin felt in regard to his negligence, when it seemed that just then it began to dawn upon his mind that he had been culpably negligent, and that the reckoning would be anything but agreeable. 'Well,' said I, 'deacon, what do you propose to do?' 'I can't do anything as I see; it is too late,' was his reply. I said, 'These sheep must be in Buffalo before to-morrow morning.' 'But they are in the pasture, a half a mile away?' 'No matter if they are five miles away, they must be driven up and got under way.' So, after supper, we took lanterns, went away off down into a back lot, drove up a large flock of sheep, got them in onto the barn floor, when, by the light of a lantern, I selected the required number (forty), handling every one of them myself, taking care to select only such as were of good size, with a heavy fleece of fine wool, turned them into the road, and started for Buffalo. There were three of us to drive the sheep; the deacon, the boy and myself, all on horseback. I kept the boy ahead to guard the cross roads, one after another. After we had got pretty well under way, the deacon proposed to turn back. I said, 'No, you must help us on a way further;' and so I kept him along, he from time to time urging to be released, until we arrived at the top of Walden's hill, as it was in those days called; the first rise of ground as you go out on Main street. We were just upon the borders of the village, which was in sight. There he turned back, not wishing to have the reckoning just then. It was already broad daylight. In a few minutes after, the sheep were yarded, when I learned that the missing buck from Hamburg had arrived, but that there was still one wanting of a different breed, which was with Major Miller, on Slosson's farm, about eight miles east, on the road to Williamsville; past which I had come, with the other sheep, but a little time before.

"This buck had been loaned to Major Miller, and he had promised to return it here in time for the fair. Without more ado, I put a fresh horse (the doctor's favorite mare, Kate) into the small wagon, and was soon at the Slosson farm. The family were just arising from their beds. I obtained a hearing with the Major, who said the ram was with his flock, some distance off in the pasture. He started out two or three of his boys, when off we all went to the fields, after the sheep. When in the barn-yard, I requested the boys to catch the buck, while I went to the wagon for a rope. On my return, the buck was still with the sheep, which I thought a little strange, as the boys knew that I was in great haste; nevertheless, I pitched

into the buck, and he pitched into me; from which I came out second best, as he had given me a tremendous bunt, which sent me rolling across the yard. This pleased the Miller boys right well, it being precisely what they expected, as they knew the combative propensities of the old fellow, and I did not. In the next attempt I was more successful. I got hold of him and hung on until he was finally securely bound and in my wagon; when, taking my seat, old Kate came through on the double-quick. I soon had the buck tied, in the yard I have so often mentioned. Just then, Doctor Chapin came out from the house, pipe in mouth, having just risen from the breakfast table; when, after giving some words of commendation for my active zeal in getting the stock into the fair, he turned to take a look at the newly-arrived buck, and incautiously approached within the length of his tether. I saw the intention, but, before I could give the note of warning, as quick as thought, the buck made a spring, and sent the doctor rolling in the dirt. My bones were still aching from the bunt he had given me, but, notwithstanding I feared the doctor was seriously hurt, I could not restrain a laugh at the scene. Fortunately, he was not much injured.

“The day was fine, the entries quite numerous, and the display of animals and products highly creditable; and everything passed off to the satisfaction of all concerned. But the crowning joy with me was the ball in the evening. I was to wear a brand new suit of clothes, made from cloth manufactured of some very fine merino wool from our own sheep; and, being very fond of dancing, I expected to have a gay time, which I did, in fact. It forms one of the green spots in my life, which still lingers in my memory.”

The village paper, in its next issue, comments upon this ball, as follows:

\* \* \* “The assembly exhibited the congregated beauty and worth of the village and country, mingling in all the equality, harmony and conviviality of good feeling. The managers of the society expressed a hope that the ladies who attend the next anniversary ball will appear in domestic manufactures, and they who assisted in making their own will receive the awards of the society, and the distinction to which such merits will entitle them.”

The phrase “domestic manufactures,” implies that the fabric, as well as the fashioning of it, should depend solely upon the fair fingers of these village belles.

“At that period,” writes Mr. Allen, “Seneca oil,—petroleum, as it is now called,—was kept only in drug stores, and solely used in making ‘British Oil,’ and ‘Oil of Spike,’ both of which were made by mixing the oil with spirits of turpentine in equal quantities. The sale of these preparations was



quite limited, and from three to five gallons of the oil was considered a large supply. There was an old man living out on Oil creek, then a *terra incognita* to dwellers hereabouts, who came to Buffalo every spring, with two ten gallon kegs slung across the back of an old white mare. These kegs would be full of Seneca oil when he started from home, but by the time he got here,—several days being occupied in the journey,—half the oil, more or less, would have leaked out; and, if he succeeded in arriving here with ten gallons out of the twenty, he considered it great good luck. That amount, even, would meet all possible demands, if, indeed, it did not glut the market. He obtained the oil by spreading a woolen blanket upon the surface of the spring where it arose, by means of which the oil was gathered.”

From this humble beginning dates the history of the enormous business of mineral oil production in the United States.

In the month of August, 1822, Mr. Allen was sent to Detroit to take temporary charge of a store which Mr. Pratt, together with a nephew of Doctor Chapin, had established in that place the preceding year. Detroit was then a small French town, which Mr. Allen reached by a sail-vessel—the only steamer then on the lake having been disabled by a broken shaft, which was being repaired in Albany. He remained there less than two months. About this time, the growing prosperity of Mr. Pratt’s business had been such as to justify the location of a branch establishment at Painesville, Ohio. This business was no longer confined to drugs and medicines, but embraced groceries, hardware, paints, oils, etc. In addition to this business, Mr. Pratt carried on in the rear of his store a kind of exchange office, by virtue of an arrangement made between him and the Canandaigua branch of the Utica Bank, which supplied the notes or bills. On the tenth day of February, 1824, Mr. Allen arrived at his majority; when, by the terms of the compact between himself and Mr. Pratt, he was to be admitted into partnership with that gentleman. In the meantime, however, Mr. Pratt’s ever extending business operations had induced his forming a partnership with one Horace Meech, which rendered the introduction of Mr. Allen impracticable. Mr. Allen was, however, repaid for his disappointment by being offered the munificent

salary of one thousand dollars a year, as general manager of the store, which he cheerfully accepted. The usual salary of clerks at this time was two hundred dollars; aside from Mr. Allen's salary, the highest paid in the village was three hundred dollars *per annum*. But there was something more precious than money that insured the fidelity of young Allen to the new firm, and to the interests of Mr. Pratt. He bore the yoke of this servitude more meekly, for that he had many months previous become the vassal, thrall and bondsman of Mr. Pratt's girlish and charming sister. At the expiration of two years, the firm of Pratt & Meech was dissolved, and Mr. Allen became a co-partner with Mr. Pratt, the firm being known as Pratt, Allen & Co.

The "Co.," by the way, was a purely ornamental appendage to the title of the firm, and only existed in the mercantile imagination.

"For the first two or three years after we commenced in the little store," Mr. Allen remarks, "our goods were forwarded from New York to Albany in sloops, from thence to Buffalo by the large Canastota wagons, drawn by five to seven horses, so common in those times. They usually came in here several together. I remember, on one occasion, seeing seven of these seven-horse wagons come along down Main street in a line; they made a very imposing appearance."

I have spoken of Mr. Allen's early relations to the Indians. Those of our citizens who remember Red Jacket, Pollard, Stevenson, Seneca White, Two-guns, Captain Cold, and their brother chieftains, will bear testimony to the truth, that however degraded a few of them may have been by the master vice of drunkenness, they were men of rare natural endowments, and of fine, commanding presence. The race has sadly degenerated since the days of Red Jacket and Cornplanter. It may not be amiss here, to relate two unpublished anecdotes of the chief last named, which present an interesting phase of Indian character.

"I can best illustrate his standing and influence in their (the Iroquois) councils, perhaps, by relating an incident that occurred here at Buffalo in an



annual council, held for the purpose of transacting their business with the United States, to receive their annuities, etc.

Some months before, the Seneca chiefs had borrowed, of a person here in Buffalo, the sum of five hundred dollars, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of a delegation of the chiefs to Washington on public business, pledging for its reimbursement the Grand Island annuity due to them on the first of June, from the State of New York. The creditor appeared at this council for his pay, and presented his vouchers, properly authenticated, to the agent. The money was counted out, including the wod-dod-e-yock, literally growth, (interest); and, as it was being handed over in payment of the debt, some one arose, and objected to its being paid until they had looked a little further into the justice of the claim; arguing that a deduction from the amount claimed should be made, for the reason, that their delegation had stopped at Oneida on their way, and taken from that people an Indian along with them to Washington, and defrayed his expenses there and back; consequently, the Senecas had not the entire benefit of the loan; therefore, the whole sum should not be paid by them. In vain it was urged, on the other hand, that the money was loaned to the Senecas on the faith of the Nation, and the pledge of that specific annuity; that the creditor knowing nothing of, and having nothing to do with the manner of spending the money, was in no way responsible for the wrong-doing of their delegates in the premises; and, that if there was a claim against anybody, it was the Oneidas, for they had, through their delegate who was sent on to Washington with the Senecas, participated in whatever benefits had resulted from the expenditure of the money borrowed. Still the payment of it was strenuously opposed by a considerable number. The debate waxed warm, and words ran high.

“At this juncture, Cornplanter, who had all this time sat apparently an uninterested listener to the controversy, arose, and walked deliberately across the floor of the council-house to the agent’s pay-table, where the money which he had at first counted out for the payment of this debt lay, in a pile by itself, and asked the agent if he had looked at the computation of interest to see that it was correct. ‘Yes,’ replied that officer. ‘And is the exact amount of the claim contained in this pile of money?’ taking it up in his hand. ‘Yes,’ was the answer. Cornplanter turned, and walked deliberately to the claimant, dropped the money into his hat which hung by the rim between his knees, and, turning to the objectors, said: ‘This debt is paid, and there is no more to be said. It is enough; Cornplanter has spoken!’ and, with a wave of his hand, as much as to say to the agent, ‘Proceed with your business,’ resumed his seat. Not always in this way exactly, but somewhat after this manner, was he wont to enforce his ideas of honesty and fair dealing on the part of the council.

“In the autumn of 1835, Cornplanter visited Buffalo for the last time. He came, as usual, to attend the annual council for the transaction of their business with the United States; receiving annuities, distribution of goods, etc. He remained, and participated in all that was done of a public character; and, when the council-fire was about to be covered, there was a sudden movement on the part of the loiterers outside the council-house toward the door, and all who could find room went inside. Cornplanter arose, and, in a solemn and impressive manner, recounted the principal events of his life, as connected with the interests of his nation. He said he had endeavored conscientiously to discharge his whole duty to his people. Whatever errors he might have committed, were errors in judgment and not of the heart. If he had done any wrong, or in any way given offence to any one present, without just cause, he desired the aggrieved party to come forward and be reconciled. It was his wish to be at peace with all men. He was about to go to his home, never again to leave it, until the Great Spirit should call him hence. He had done with the active business of life; and he added, ‘When I leave this place, most of you will have seen me for the last time.’ He then gave them advice and counsel for the future; went from one to another and took them by the hand, saying a few parting words to each; passed out of the door, mounted his horse, called his traveling companions, and left, never to return. He died on the fifth of March following, aged about one hundred years.”

Mr. Allen was familiarly acquainted with Red Jacket during the last twelve years of the latter's life; and nothing incensed him more than listening to the exaggerated and sensational stories current, respecting the vices attributed to the great aboriginal orator. He stoutly maintained that his Indian friend was by no means an habitual drunkard, even in his worst estate; that, for considerable periods of time, Red Jacket would abstain from the use of all intoxicating drinks; and when any council was to be held, or any important business to be transacted, his intellect was never known to be obscured by the fumes of alcohol. It was, nevertheless, true, as Mr. Allen admitted, that the old chief would occasionally visit the settlements and drink to excess; following the example of many a brilliant orator and astute statesman among his white cotemporaries. Upon such occasions, neither he nor his Indian comrades possessed the art of veiling his fallen dignity from the public gaze.



The charges of cowardice, treachery and moral weakness, which have been urged against Red Jacket, were, in Mr. Allen's opinion, equally unfounded. Red Jacket's genius had its appropriate sphere in the council, rather than on the war-path. He was a statesman of the woods, and, like many another in a higher plane of enlightenment, the policy which temporarily governed his conduct exposed his motives to misinterpretation and censure. But always and unswervingly he was a patriot, and had one end in view, the happiness and welfare of his people. With all the unconquerable, fiery energy of his nature, he would throw himself a living barrier between the child-like helplessness of his people and the craft and insatiate greed of the pale-faces. He was a phenomenal barbarian. In the memorable trial of Tommy Jemmy for murder, Red Jacket sat by the side of the counsel for the prisoner, scanning with his piercing eye the lineaments of every talesman who had been summoned as a juror, suggesting who should be accepted and who challenged, and insisting that one who wore "goggles" should, before he was sworn, be compelled by the court to remove those shutters from the windows of his soul, that he might look within for the evidence of honesty or guile.

Mr. Allen's estimate of Red Jacket's character was shared by others who had equal or better opportunities of observation. That Red Jacket was constitutionally brave, admits of little controversy. The testimony of Generals Worth and Porter and of Major Fraser,\* ought to settle that question forever. His energy and resolute will-power were remarkable. Contesting the ground, inch by inch, with his adversaries, after every resource had been exhausted, if finally beaten, he would invariably appeal to the Great Father at Washington. To obtain the means to do this, taxed a mind, always fertile in resources, to the utmost. But he knew no such word as "fail." With means ludicrously inadequate to the emergency, he would,

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\* See letter of Major Fraser, in the Addenda, p. 363.

in company with some faithful adherent who could serve as interpreter, set out for the distant Capital.

"On one of these missions," writes Mr. Allen, "he took with him 'Hank Johnson,' a white man by birth, but an Indian by education and habit; having been captured by the Indians in childhood. This trip to Washington was in the latter part of the winter of 1828, I think. Early in the month of April of that year, I was on my way to New York in a stage coach, there being no other means of public conveyance thus early in the season. Having got down below Utica, somewhere in the neighborhood of Herkimer, I was sitting on the back seat of the coach,—the day being warm, the curtains were up,—looking out ahead. A slight curve in the road revealed to me two Indians picking their way along through the mud, on foot. On nearing, I discovered them to be Red Jacket and Hank Johnson.

The stage stopped, and, after a hearty greeting, I learned (what I knew before, by the way) that they were returning from Washington. They were out of money, and were obliged to travel on foot. The passengers supplied them with a small sum of money, and they were advised to make themselves known at Utica, and possibly Mr. Faxon, the managing stage proprietor there, might dead-head them in his stage. After I returned home, I learned from Hank Johnson that they were kindly received at Utica, and a considerable sum of money raised, with which a horse, saddle, bridle and port-manteau were purchased and presented to Red Jacket, together with funds sufficient to defray their expenses home. Johnson used to relate the various incidents of their journey; and, with much gusto, what he considered an amusing one which occurred at Geneva on their way home. When approaching the town, Red Jacket told Johnson he intended to have a good dinner. So they passed along through the lower town,—Red Jacket on horseback and Johnson on foot,—up the hill to the hotel, where quite a number of gentlemen were sitting on the stoop in front. The hostler came up to take his horse. Red Jacket shook his head, and, assuming an air of grandeur, ejaculated:

"Landlord!"

The landlord then made his appearance, when the following colloquy occurred:

"Ham?"

"Yes."

"Eggs?"

"Yes."

"Oats?"

"Yes."

"Take horse," and throwing mine host the reins, Red Jacket alighted.



This is one of the very few instances on record, when the chief condescended to speak English. Mr. Allen describes him as usually very sedate and dignified in his demeanor. Occasionally, however, his austerity would relax, and melt into a bland and smiling mood that captivated all hearts. At such times he betrayed a fine sense of humor, and was wont to indulge in a vein of pleasantry, badinage or sly irony, often enlivened by anecdotes which convulsed his red auditors with laughter. Still, his prevailing frame of mind was contemplative, abstracted and severe; too subjective, in fine, to be consistent with an unvarying sunniness of exterior. Like every intelligent Iroquois, he was an ardent admirer of George Washington.

"When," remarks Mr. Allen, "he was particularly pleased with and desirous of complimenting any of his white friends, he would say in English, '*Just like Wash-e-ton;*' his *beau ideal* of all that was great and good in man.

On all public occasions, Red Jacket was scrupulously neat and painstaking in his dress and appearance; and his carriage and air were those of a man calmly conscious of his superlative powers and commanding influence.

"In person," says Mr. Allen, "he was above the medium size; five feet ten inches in height; large limbs; well rounded muscles; physically as well as intellectually strong. Sometimes he was dressed in a blue cloth coat, cut after the peculiar Indian fashion, and girt about the waist with a wampum or beaded sash; blue leggings, ornamented at the sides and around the bottom with white beads; a red silk kerchief, knotted, sailor-fashion, around his neck; plain moccasins on his feet, which were considerably misshapen by rheumatic pains; and always, when in full dress, with his Washington medal suspended from his neck, and his tomahawk-pipe in his hand. At other times he was dressed in a smoke-tanned deer skin coat and leggings, fringed with the same material at the seams."

Cornplanter, in his extreme old age, when Mr. Allen first knew him, was a bowed and wrinkled warrior not much above the average stature. One of his eyes was disfigured by a drooping lid, and his nether lip had a twist which imparted a somewhat grotesque look to his visage. But when he arose to speak in council, his voice was sonorous and thrilling, and his presence appeared dignified and commanding.

Mr. Allen was married on the twentieth day of November, 1826, to Miss Marilla A. Pratt, daughter of Samuel Pratt, senior, and sister of the late Hiram Pratt; a union which was productive of great happiness.

Mr. Hiram Pratt, a few years later, retired from the firm of Pratt, Allen & Co. in 1831, to assume the position of president of the old Bank of Buffalo. At his death, he was succeeded in the office by Mr. Allen; who filled the position until its affairs were wound up, and the bank went out of existence in the disastrous year of 1837. The financial storm which swept over the entire country during the years 1836 and 1837 involved in its wreck the estate of the late Hiram Pratt; and plunged the affairs of Mr. Allen into irremediable disorder.

The next ten years of Mr. Allen's life were spent in a heroic but almost hopeless effort to extricate his affairs from the embarrassments that had overtaken him; a task whose proportions would have appalled a weaker man, but to which he addressed himself with an energy that was tireless, and with a spirit of cheerfulness that no adverse fortune could quench. He triumphed at last, as such men will, and his indomitable energies sought new fields of exertion.

Communication by rail between Buffalo and the coal fields of Pennsylvania, has been a dream of our Buffalo merchants for more than a generation. It was a favorite project of Mr. Allen. No one at this day would seriously talk of constructing a railroad between these points without municipal aid. That the Buffalo, Bradford & Pittsburgh Railroad, without this encouragement, and almost on the eve of triumph, failed to become a verity, was no fault of Mr. Allen.

Lack of capital, and the proverbial apathy of our wealthy citizens, are responsible for the failure. Mr. Allen was the president of the company, and the life and soul of the enterprise. As such, his course has met in some quarters adverse criticism; but those who knew the man were assured that he was not responsible for the miscarriage of the scheme, but



that the labor and time which he devoted to it, in the end were unrequited and unappreciated.

I approach with reluctance another subject, that, in the minds of sentimentalists, may awaken long slumbering prejudices, which involve the motives and characters of honored citizens now deceased. When the future destiny of Buffalo as a great city was foreshadowed, the removal of the Indians, whose tract of thousands of acres bordered on it, became inevitable. No humanitarian or philanthropic considerations could stand in the way. A few hundred indolent semi-barbarians could not preserve the choicest agricultural region in the immediate vicinity of Buffalo, for their hunting grounds. The town must grow, and its expansion could not be stayed by such a puny barrier. Aside from this, it was vitally important to the Indians themselves that they should be removed from the corrupting influences of a great city. Capt. Pollard, their noblest chief after the decease of Cornplanter, saw, with prophetic vision, the rapid destruction of his people, from the causes at which I have hinted. A majority of the educated and Christianized Indians favored the removal, as the only practical means of averting their complete demoralization and consequent extinction. Their removal, to which Mr. Allen lent his active aid, has been fraught with incalculable benefits both to Indians and whites; and the Senecas to-day, in their new home at Cattaraugus, are rich in lands; and, were they to emulate the white man's industry and thrift, would be an exceptionally wealthy community. That some of the means employed to induce the Indians to sell the Buffalo Creek reservation were questionable in their character, cannot be denied, but it would be difficult to attach the responsibility to any one person. The Indians themselves were divided into factions, each eager to overreach or punish the other. Remembering by what tortuous paths great party leaders arrive at magnificent results in these latter days, let us carefully bury in forgetfulness, the scandals and prejudices of a departed era. I should be doing the memory of Mr. Allen

injustice, did I not add in this connection what is within my own personal knowledge, that he retained until his death the confidence and friendship of the Indians, in a remarkable degree. They have never ceased to call him "The Helpful," or "The Protector;" and the appositeness and felicity of these titles were demonstrated, almost daily, until his death.

Mr. Allen had an ardent passion for sylvan sports, especially angling, and was an adept in the use of both rod and gun; although his life was too busy to admit of frequent indulgence in such pastimes. Still, he would occasionally snatch a few hours from inexorable business pursuits, to seek some woodland solitude, where the muffled drum of the partridge was heard, or where, in shaded pools, or lapsing, ledgy rivulets, the speckled trout gleamed through the waters, as they darted at hovering insects, gay with burnished wings.

In a series of papers written for the benefit of his grandchildren, and printed in one of our local journals, he related some thrilling experiences of the old Indian and pioneer hunters; particularly the exploits of Capt. Strong (Os-qui-ye-son) and Philip Conjockety; not to mention his eccentric friend, Justice Slade, who slew two noble bucks with one charge of his rifle.

The red deer were plentiful about Buffalo a half century or more ago, and the howl of the wolf and scream of the panther were occasionally heard on the skirts of the primeval woods that girt the settlement. Near where the gas-works now stand, was a grassy glade, circled by sedgy swamps and black-ash forest. Often the apparition of a family of deer, quietly cropping the short, sweet grass that carpeted this opening, has gladdened the eyes of Orlando and the truant young villagers; a slight exclamation of wonder or delight, and, lo! this vision of beauty had vanished into the gloom of the adjacent forest.

Let me again quote from Mr. Allen's manuscript.

\* \* \* "I got Jacob Jameson, who was studying medicine with Doctor Chapin, to go up with me and try and buy an Indian pony belonging to an



Onondaga Indian on the reservation. After getting up some little distance beyond the Indian church, galloping along in a sort of blind path through high bushes, we came into an open glade containing, perhaps, half an acre, nearly circular in form. When, just as I, being ahead, emerged from the bushes, I discovered an enormous buck, with his head down, feeding, not more than twenty feet distant. I turned my horse's head a little, and in three or four jumps came up alongside, and gave him a heavy blow across the loins with my riding whip. I will not undertake to describe the jump he made, but it was tremendous, and he bounded out of sight in a moment. A few steps further on, we met an Indian, shooting young pigeons with a bow and arrow. We told him of the deer and the direction he had gone, when he started off upon a run, to get his gun and follow the trail."

\* \* \* "In the fall of 1820, there suddenly appeared here a swarm of black squirrels. Buildings, fences and trees were covered with them. It was said that they migrated from Canada, swimming the Niagara; how this was, I know not. Certain it is, however, that this shore of the river was lined with them. I shot fourteen from one little willow near the shore, one afternoon. The tree was not twenty feet high. There were some large oak trees standing on the common, between Main and Washington streets, somewhere between North and South Division streets, from which the Indian boys picked off hundreds in the course of a few weeks, with their bows and arrows."

The history of Mr. Allen's career during the past twenty years, is, in effect, the history of Buffalo for the same period. There has scarcely been any civic undertaking or public enterprise that has not received the impress of his personality. As a member of our board of supervisors and of our common council; as manager of a railroad; as mayor of our city; as member of the legislature; as one of the founders of the Orphan Asylum; as a manager of the Insane Asylum; as councilor of the University of Buffalo; as president of the Historical Society; as chairman of the Old Settler's Festival; as trustee of one of our savings banks, and chairman of its building committee; as presiding officer in public meetings without number, and as councilor and friend of innumerable other enterprises into which he contrived to infuse something of his own tireless, inexhaustible energy and dauntless spirit, his name will be written on every page of our later annals. There is so much

work to be accomplished in society, so much need of men of achievement, where men of words are so redundant, that Orlando Allen could not be idle. To a man so richly and variedly endowed, with such overflowing vitality and such exuberance of strength, labor in every form is a relief and a pastime. If it kept him continually prominent in the public eye, the voice of envy and detraction was hushed, when the unselfish and chivalrous nature of the man was known.

The career of Mr. Allen during the past twenty years is crowded with incidents of an interesting character, but the limits of this paper will not admit of even a passing glance at them. I have preferred, rather, to dwell upon the events of his early life, with their novel and picturesque surroundings; reserving for another occasion, details which are fresh in all our memories.

For two or three years before his death, his family and intimate friends discovered that he had become affected with a chronic disease of the heart. Winters spent in Florida and Southern California did not woo back the health so eagerly coveted. And yet, to all appearances, there was little abatement of the old-time vigor, and no eclipse of that joyous spirit that irradiated happiness all around him. He had passed through many vicissitudes, had breasted many storms, had been defrauded of a fortune, and had but just regained it after a weary legal warfare that ended only with the court of last resort, and had done an amount of work of which few men are capable. At last, with a competency that justified cessation of care and toil, surrounded by a united and affectionate family, with a capacity for enjoyment that few men possess, with every prospect that could render the evening of his life beautiful, the strong man bowed himself.

“Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; vanity of vanities; all is vanity.”

“What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun.”

Mr. Allen died in Buffalo, in the Christian faith, which he had professed for nearly fifty years, on the fourth day of Sep-



tember, 1874. His widow and two worthy sons, William K. and Henry F. Allen, survive him. He himself followed to the grave four of his children, Sarah J. Allen, Hiram Pratt Allen, Orlando Allen, Jr., and Lucy A., wife of Hon. Nelson K. Hopkins.

Mr. Allen's mental character exhibited a rare combination of qualities. Eminently a man of action, he was a man of reflection as well, but not to that degree that leads men to carefully poise opposing arguments and forces, and then ponder, hesitate and doubt, until the golden opportunity has fled. He had a cool, practical judgment, and the faculty of seeing both sides of a question,—of taking in at a glance the arguments to be met, and the difficulties to be overcome. His course once marked out, it was followed, with an inflexible tenacity of purpose, to the end. He was never bigoted or narrow in his views, but, while steadfastly loyal to his own convictions, was uniformly tolerant and charitable toward the opinions of others.

He never sought office, and never practiced any of the arts of popularity. Indeed, while not insensible to the favorable opinion of his fellow-men, he preferred the approval of his own conscience to popular applause, which he knew to be capricious and evanescent.

He did not readily admit his acquaintances to the inner circle of his friendship; but, once admitted, they were attached to him as by hooks of steel. No labor or sacrifice in their behalf was too great or costly, and there was something in the royal nature of the man that led the perplexed and troubled to repose in security upon his ample strength. He possessed an innate refinement of mind, clear, acute perceptions, and a vigorous understanding. Without the aid of an early education, he found opportunities in his busy life for self-culture, and had enriched his intellect by reading and by habits of reflection. He was never unemployed; if he had but a moment of leisure he would seize some favorite book, and become absorbed in its perusal. He had the blessed faculty of labor, and his spirits

seemed to rise and grow buoyant in proportion to the height of the difficulties which rose in his pathway. He was not an egotist in the offensive sense of the term, for he rarely spoke of himself or his achievements, but he had illimitable confidence in his own powers, and his iron will and indomitable energy took no account of a possible failure when he had fairly embarked in an enterprise.

Although he could exhibit a righteous indignation when just cause arose, his temper was remarkably serene and equable. He apparently never lost his cheerfulness in the midst of disaster, for he never doubted his ability to conquer the most adverse circumstances. He knew how to "labor and to wait," and saw a silver edging to the darkest cloud. His memory was wonderfully retentive, and was an inexhaustible storehouse of fact and anecdote relating to the past. As a story-teller he was inimitable; and, like Abraham Lincoln, he had an apposite and happy anecdote to illustrate or enforce every proposition.

His heart could never grow old; and so tenderly had the passing years touched him, that, on the verge of three-score years and ten, his hair was still unbleached, his step had the elastic spring of youth, and his whole aspect betokened the meridian strength and glory of manhood. In the autumn of his days, his feelings had the glad freshness of the spring-time. He had not grown weary of the warfare of life, nor misanthropic, nor cynical. There was not the slightest morbid taint in his nature. He accepted life as the good God gave it—the sweet and the bitter—and was grateful for the happiness he could extract from it. He had imagination, too, and was easily kindled into enthusiasm, but his robust sense forbade his being led astray by any chimera. He was an affectionate husband and father, a humble and sincere Christian, and a notably useful citizen. He was also, I may add, a man of large and active benevolence.

I cannot better close this feeble tribute than by quoting the remarks of the late Rev. Dr. Lord, made at Mr. Allen's funeral, which I find reported in one of our daily newspapers:



“Orlando Allen was a man of great power and untiring activity. Under different circumstances and with better opportunities, he would have been the leader of armies, or guided the councils of the State; for, in the speaker’s opinion, he was one of those men born to command. Could any one doubt that in God’s amazing universe of spirits, that active, earnest soul would find an exalted place, where its energies would be eternal?”

## ADDENDA.

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The following letter, printed in the *Buffalo Patriot* of August 7th, 1821, was written by Major Donald Fraser, aid-de-camp to General Porter, and in command of all the Indians in the service of our government, on this frontier, during the last war with Great Britain.

The signature, "Black Wolf," is a translation of the Indian name bestowed upon Major Fraser by the Indians.

"MR. SALISBURY:

"SIR—A deserved eulogy on the character of the venerable chief of the Six Nations, the late Farmer's Brother, published a short time since in the *New York American* has, I perceive, been copied into several other papers; it is due to the character of that celebrated chief, Red Jacket, to correct the statement so far as it alludes to him.

"Red Jacket is charged with being cowardly, treacherous, dishonorable and intemperate. It ill becomes us to charge him with cowardice. At Fort George, Chippewa, &c., he led his men bravely into action, and if ever there had been a doubt respecting his courage, his conduct in those bloody scenes should have acquitted him thenceforward; but the fact is otherwise. In what act of his life has he evinced treachery to his nation, or to the people of these States? I challenge a single one! His conduct during the late war, in support of the cause of our country, shows he was not treacherous to us; and the course which he has invariably pursued, in relation to the various propositions which have been made for the purchase of the Indian lands, shows, at the same time, his honesty to his own nation, and acquits him fully of the charge of dishonor.

"The last charge cannot be rebutted *in toto*. He is, at times, intemperate; but the writer of this article has seen him during two campaigns in the enemy's country, not only refrain from the use of ardent spirits, but earnestly urge the commissary-general not to permit any to be furnished to his men while engaged in our service in Canada. I have repeatedly seen him in council with us, and know that he made it a principle to abstain from liquor during the session.

"Red Jacket is truly a great man, and commands respect for his astonishing powers of oratory, and his gallantry in the field. It will be but an act of justice to him, for the editors of the *American*, and those of other papers who may have copied the articles alluded to, to give this an insertion."

"BLACK WOLF."



## JOSEPH BRANT AND THE BATTLE OF WYOMING.

Extract from notes of conversations at a meeting of the Club of the Buffalo Historical Society.

Mr. Orlando Allen said: "I was not present at the last meeting of the Club, at which, as I learn from the Secretary's minutes, allusion was made to Captain Brant, in connection with the massacre of Wyoming, and Campbell's poem on that theme. There is an incident relating to the subject, which I would beg leave to relate. In the latter part of 1836, or early part of 1837, Storm's *Life of Brant* was issued from the press. The *Democratic Review*, in noticing the work, sharply criticised and questioned the ground Colonel Stone had taken, in combatting the generally received opinion, that Brant was the master spirit in that lamentable affair.

"Although well satisfied, as he afterwards told me, of the correctness of his statements, founded as they were upon unquestionable evidence furnished by the Brant family, Colonel Stone desired to fortify his position by testimony from unprejudiced sources. You, sir (turning to Ex-President Fillmore), then a member of Congress from this district, gave him a letter to me, in which you briefly stated his wishes. He came to my house in the month of November and presented the letter. I had a long and pleasing conversation with him, in the course of which he told me the facts of the case, and said he desired to find some Indians who had been present at the Wyoming affair, and procure their testimony on the subject. I told him I knew several participants in the massacre, and among them the distinguished Seneca chief, Ga-oun-do-wah-nah, or Captain Pollard.

"The next morning I drove Colonel Stone out to the reservation, and to Pollard's residence. The old chief lived in a well-furnished one-and-a-half story house, surrounded by an orchard and finely cultivated fields. There was an air of comfort and thrift all about the place. We found the chief confined to his bed by an attack of rheumatism. I introduced Colonel Stone to him, and told him the object of our visit; to vindicate, if possible, the memory of the dead, and settle a vexed question in history. Captain Pollard maintained a thoughtful silence for a few moments, and then said to me in the Seneca tongue:

"I was at Wyoming, and probably know as much about that affair as any living man. You know that I was once a pagan warrior, but that I have since become a Christian, and look upon the scenes of my younger days, with abhorrence and regret. I dislike to dwell in thought upon this subject, much more in words. But as it is a duty to vindicate the dead, I will conquer my reluctance and tell you what I know. There were two war parties at Wyoming. One was composed of Senecas, led

by a chief now living, and whom you know. The other was composed of Onondagas, led by a man now living on that reservation, and whom you also know,—he is a very aged man. Besides, there were a few Mohawks, but not enough to form a distinct band, and they joined our party, the Senecas (for they were our neighbors then), encamped at Lewiston, on the Niagara. Captain Brant was not there. I know the fact. He was at Niagara at the time.' ”

Mr. O. H. Marshall.—“Who did Captain Pollard say led the Senecas at Wyoming?”

Mr. Allen.—“It was Old King, as I remember.”

#### REMINISCENCES.—FROM MR. ALLEN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

##### FIRST SIGHT OF A STEAMBOAT.

“Shortly after I came to Buffalo, in the summer of 1819, I rode down to Sandy Town, as it was called. I followed the creek to the beach; and, after going down that a short distance, turned off, inland, passing through a belt of timber, and came into a large opening, containing five or ten acres, possibly more. On the east it was bounded by a marshy swamp; on the west by a range of sand hills, which bordered the beach of the river; on the north by a high ridge of land, and on the south by the belt of timber I have mentioned. Some of these sand hills were from twenty to thirty feet high, and partially covered with small trees. There were the remains of the long ranges of log barracks which were used by soldiers during the war. There were also two log dwelling-houses, which appeared to have originally belonged to the barracks. These were inhabited,—and this was Sandy Town!

“While loitering back of these sand hills, looking about, everything being new to me, I heard a burst of music, in loud-swelling notes, that came floating on the breeze from over the sand hills, which then obstructed my view of the river. I forced my horse to mount one of these elevations, from which I saw, out upon the water, a large vessel, with flags and streamers flying; a band upon the upper deck, discoursing sweet music; a large number of gaily dressed ladies and gentlemen; smoke and steam issuing from her several chimneys and pipes, and more than all, a long hawser, reaching from the vessel to the shore, to which were attached some twenty or thirty yoke of oxen, tugging away, hauling the vessel up the rapids. This was the steamboat *Walk-in-the-water*, of which I had often heard but never before seen. It was, to me, a novel and splendid sight, making an indelible impression upon my mind.

“The *Walk-in-the-water* and Sill Thompson & Co.'s “horn breeze,”\* became familiar objects to me ere long.

\* See *Early Reminiscences of Buffalo and Vicinity*, p. 164.



“While out on this or some similar excursion, I noticed some coffins, partially exposed; the sand in which they had been buried having been blown away. There were evidences that considerable numbers had been buried there;—soldiers, probably, who died while in cantonement. There were one or two coffins which were entirely exposed, their lids being off. The skeletons seemed to be there, though the coffins were filled with sand. The bones, so far as they were in sight, were clean and dry.

“On my return, I spoke to Doctor Chapin, or some one, about them; and, coming to the conclusion that there would be no harm in securing one of them for the office, I resolved to do so. So, one very dark night, not long after, I took a bag, mounted a horse, and rode down to Sandy Town. The box which I had marked out as the one I wanted to empty, was in pretty close proximity to the dwelling-houses, in one of which there was fiddling and dancing going on, on that dark night. There was a bright light in the house, the door stood open, and let a stream of light far out upon the sand, reaching to the box in question, which I feared might expose my operations to the inmates. But I concluded to run the risk. So, dismounting from my horse, slipping the bridle-rein over my arm, I squatted down and commenced feeling in the sand for the bones. With the larger ones there was no difficulty, and knowing pretty well where to feel carefully for the smaller ones composing the hands and feet, I soon went through the box from head to foot, mounted my horse with the bag in front and rode home. On examining my prize by the light of day, I was agreeably surprised to find that there was not a bone missing; I had the skeleton, complete and sound. It remained in the office for long years after I left.”

#### AN INDIAN SPY.

“Doctor Chapin had one or two horses, which he sometimes used in his rides, and which we were accustomed to turn upon the commons. When wanted for use, they were hunted and brought up. The Irishman, O'Brian, of whom I have spoken, was generally pretty good upon the trail; sometimes, however, he would be at fault. One morning in the summer of 1820, I went out in search of these horses. I went down Seneca street to the woods, which then commenced a little way east of where Wells street now intersects, possibly nearer to where Michigan street is. At that time, Amasa Ransom's house on the corner of Seneca and what is now Centre street, was the last one on Seneca going east; nor was the street opened beyond the woods above mentioned.

“There were places here and there in the woods, comparatively open, which afforded pretty good grazing. There was one, in particular, containing half

an acre or more, which, at some period long before, had been thoroughly cleared of trees and stumps; not a vestige of either remained. It had a clean nice sward, its outer edge fringed with thorn bushes, and a small clump of them standing near its center. It was a beautiful grass-plot. It must, I think, have been cleared by the hand of man; possibly an Indian's wigwam had once occupied the place. This spot was as far east as Chicago street, and south of the line of Seneca, two or three hundred feet. Hereabouts, as I expected, I found the horses. The grass was cropped off quite close, in this little "oasis," except one small patch close to the fringe of thorn bushes, differing so materially from all the grass around it in appearance, that it attracted my attention. On examining it more closely, I found imbedded among the roots of grass, part of a human skeleton. On taking up the skull, I noticed two unnatural holes in it. One, near the center of the forehead, appeared to have been made with a round instrument like a rifle ball. The other, in the side of the head, near the angle of the skull above the ear, had the appearance of having been made with a small hatchet or tomahawk. The cut was clean, no fracture extending from it, except that the bone at the lower lip of the cut had chipped off a little. In other respects the skull was perfect, and I carried it up to our office in my hand, it being quite clean and free from any unpleasant odor. It was seen and examined by a number of old citizens who were here at the burning of the village by the British, when a number of citizens were killed by the Indians. The prevailing opinion among them, and particularly of a Mr. Timothy McEwen, who claimed to know all about it, was, that it was the skull of a Canada Indian, who was killed here during the war, by the famous Seneca chief, Farmer's Brother, as a spy.

"The circumstances connected with the affair, as related to me then by those who claimed to know, were somewhat as follows:

"As all the world knows, the Mohawk Indians once lived within the bounds of the State of New York, but, having espoused the cause of the king against the Colonies in the Revolutionary war, at its close, they settled upon the Grand river in Canada. Subsequently, other portions of the Iroquois, bands of Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas and Tuscororas, also migrated to the lands reserved for them, on the same river. It was an Indian belonging to one of these Canada bands of Iroquois, probably a Mohawk, I think I was so informed, who came over here during the war of 1812, pretending friendship. He had been here some considerable time, associating with our Indians, when he began to be suspected as a spy. On being watched closely, circumstances transpired which seemed to fix the crime upon him, in the minds of the Indians, beyond a doubt; Farmer's Brother, Captain Pollard, Little Billy, Young King, Destroy Town, Major Berry, and others, investigated the



charges very thoroughly; indeed, he had been heard to boast of the number of scalps he had taken from our soldiers and Indians. One of the grave charges preferred against him was, that he had decoyed some of our Indians off into a solitary place, and then killed and scalped them. He was condemned by an impromptu council of chiefs and warriors, to die as a spy. He was made to lie down, when Farmer's Brother took a loaded gun from the hand of an Indian, and, after addressing the culprit upon the enormity of his offense and its consequences, he closed with words to the following effect: 'You are about to die the death of a dog; I am going to kill you now;' when, suiting the action to the word, he raised the gun and fired, putting the ball into his head; then stepped up, and gave him one blow with his tomahawk, upon the head. Turning to some young Indians present, he told them to drag the body off into the woods, and then leave it, food for dogs. This account of the execution, in its main features, agrees substantially with that given in William Ketchum's *History of Buffalo and the Senecas*, though differing somewhat in its details. I tell it as it was told to me, by an eye-witness. Taking into consideration all the circumstances of that affair, as related, particularly when I add, that my informant further told me that the body was dragged off in the direction, and left somewhere in the vicinity of where I found the skull, it seemed quite probable that the remains in question were those of that Indian spy.

"I will add, that I have heard the same statement, substantially, from the Indians themselves. In relation to Farmer's Brother, it was said, that immediately after the execution, without communicating with any one, he turned and went directly to his home on Farmer's Point, where he spent the two succeeding days and nights, lying upon his couch, with his face down, communing only with the Great Spirit and his own thoughts.

"I never saw Farmer's Brother; he died before I came to Buffalo, but from my mother-in-law's family, all of whom were more or less, and some of them most intimately acquainted with him, speaking his language fluently, I have heard much of him."

"STEEP-ROCK."

That young Allen's intercourse with the native proprietors of this region was not invariably amicable, the following incident, related by him, furnishes convincing proof:

"One evening, in the spring of 1821, an Indian by the name of Steep-Rock came in, having on no clothing except a shirt, fastened around the waist with a knife-belt, and breech-cloth. He was one of the seven Indians who were taken to Europe on exhibition in 1818. Without saying anything, or even noticing me, he walked straight to the back end of the store, picked

up a tumbler, squatted down in front of a cask, and commenced drawing whisky into the tumbler. I picked up an axe-helve, and told him to desist. He paid no attention to me, but let the liquor run, until the tumbler was running over. He turned off the faucet, and, without putting the tumbler to his lips, was about to rise to his feet, when I kicked it from his hand. He turned to face me, but on seeing my preparation for defence, he sprang for the door. Before he could make his exit, however, I let him feel the weight of the axe-helve across his shoulders; when, with one bound, he cleared the platform and steps, landing far out towards the outer edge of the sidewalk, which was then only of earth, turned, and ran down the street.

"In a few moments he came back, whooping, yelling, crying, by turns, swinging his axe, and making terrible threats of vengeance. I then began to have some fears. He was a large, strong Indian, of fine mould, but an ugly, vindictive one. He had divested himself of his shirt, but still retained the belt and knife. As I stepped out upon the platform in front of the store, I could discover no one about the store next above us; but, on turning my eye down street, I saw Henry Wormwood, a young man in the employ of Townsend & Coit, sitting on a cask in front of their building, on the corner below, the other side of Swan street. I called to him in a manner which indicated my need. He came up immediately; when, upon my informing him of the state of affairs, he drove the Indian off, without offering him any violence. Wormwood had a strong, heavy frame, and was as plucky as he was strong.

"There was a space of some eighteen inches to two feet between our store and Hart & Lay's, next above. This vacant space was in dispute between Doctor Chapin and Eli Hart, but was used in common by the occupants of the stores as a receptacle for broken crockery, bottles and glass, of which it contained a liberal supply. This open space was covered by one of our window-shutters when open.

"About nine o'clock, having forgotten all about the affair with Steep-Rock, in closing the store for the night, just as I put my hand to this shutter, I heard a jingling among the broken crockery. On stooping down and peering under the shutter, I saw the bare feet and legs of an Indian, nearly up to the knees. I knew him to be Steep-Rock, and suspected his intentions. I also knew that he could not get out without crawling upon his hands and knees, as the shutter was firmly held in its place by strong iron fastenings. I gave no intimation of recognition, but stood a moment reflecting upon the situation of affairs, when, just at that instant, I heard young Wormwood come along Swan street, and take his seat upon the steps of Townsend & Coit's building. This was, indeed, timely aid. I called to him as before. As he came up, I pointed to the feet and legs seen under the shutter. Wormwood was a



laboring man, of large muscular frame,—a match, physically, for any Indian.

“After conferring a moment as to what we had better do with him, he stood guard, while I went down below Swan street to Weed’s hardware store, and got a couple of rawhide whips. On my return, I took a light from the store, when, on throwing back the shutter, there stood Steep-Rock wedged in between the buildings, pretending to be dead drunk; as limp as a rag. His knife lay at his feet, which he had drawn from its sheath and held in his hand, in readiness to plunge it into me as I opened the shutter, which was undoubtedly his intention; but, on finding that he was discovered, and to have two instead of one to deal with, he had dropped the knife, in hopes, probably, that it would be hidden by the rubbish. With an axe-helve I poked it out, and got possession of it, when we drew him out and across the street on to the common, now Ellicott Square, turned him over upon his face, and gave him a few cuts with the rawhides on his bare shoulders and back; I think we must have given him as many as twenty, well laid on, before he showed the least sign of life or feeling. There was not the perceptible quiver of a muscle, but the blows became too hot and heavy for him to simulate dead drunk any longer, and, in an instant, as quick as a flash, he sprang to his feet, gave one of those terrific yells which the Indians were accustomed to give when in trouble, and bounded off like a deer, out of reach in a moment, taking his way towards the Indian village. We could hear his signal whoops and yells, and see his form, for a long distance,—the moon was full and shining brightly;—we could also hear responses a long distance off, in two directions.

“Steep-Rock was a vicious, ugly fellow. While in England, he twice attempted to kill the interpreter. He subsequently murdered his squaw, and died in the jail at Batavia, while awaiting his execution.”

#### JONES AND PARRISH.

“It was said that Captain Parrish spoke five of the Iroquois dialects fluently. I have no personal knowledge as to the truth of this claim. Whenever I have heard him address the Indians, it was always in the Mohawk tongue.

“Captain Jones was considered an excellent interpreter of the Seneca language. He spoke it like a native; and, for an uneducated man, had a remarkable command of the English language. His selection of words to express his ideas, was happy, and his description of scenes, graphic.

“They were both large, portly men, with gray hair and florid complexion; and, as they moved about our streets, would attract notice by their dignified carriage and gentlemanly bearing.

“On the trial of Tommy Jemmy, here in Buffalo, many of the leading chiefs of the Seneca nation were examined as witnesses for the prisoner;—among these, Red Jacket, Young King, Little Billy, Destroy Town, Captain Pollard, James Stevenson, Big Kettle; besides others, whose names I cannot recall. Captain Horatio Jones, interpreter for the New York Indians, was interpreter for the court, on this trial. When Red Jacket was called to the stand, he remarked to the court that not only the life of his friend, So-non-gise, but questions of paramount importance to his nation, were at stake; he, therefore, desired as interpreter, his friend, Mr. Pratt, O-way-non-gay (Floating Island), who was master of both the English and the Seneca languages, that what he had to say might be accurately interpreted. He did not, in the least, distrust the integrity or ability of the United States interpreter, Captain Jones, but, for other reasons, preferred that his friend, Mr. Pratt, should officiate on this occasion. Captain Jones, glad to be rid of the responsibility, stepped aside, Mr. Pratt was speedily obtained, and the trial proceeded.

“In the course of his direct examination, Red Jacket was asked, ‘How old are you?’ Answer—‘I don’t know, but my mother told me that when Fort Niagara was captured from the French by the British, I was just big enough to crawl around on the floor.’ \* \* \* He also stated, at the same time, and on the same authority, that he was born at Canoga, on the west bank of Cayuga Lake, where his parents were encamped on a fishing expedition.”





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LIFE AND  
PUBLIC SERVICES  
OF  
OLIVER FORWARD.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, JANUARY 25, 1875.

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BY HON. JAMES SHELDON.\*

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THE Buffalo Historical Society, in the prosecution of its work of gathering all the facts having relation to the early history of our city, and generally to the region of Western New York and the great lakes, have directed a memorial of the life and public services of Oliver Forward to be compiled, not only that their record may exist in some authentic form, but as a just recognition of his valuable labors. The lives of men who have rendered important services to their generation, and by their devotion to the public good have aided to accomplish beneficial results, should be borne in grateful and enduring remembrance. Too often the applause of men is given, with unsparing hand, to those who were incited to action solely by selfish considerations, and withheld from more deserving objects of approbation, whose highest ambition was to advance the interests of their age. It is the duty of the impartial historian to render to each the proper meed of honor; and if time and circumstance have contributed to induce forgetfulness of merit,

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\* Then President of the Society.



it well becomes us to review the records of the past, and award the just measure of our commendation.

Samuel Forward, the great-grandfather of the object of this memoir, emigrated from England before the year 1700, and with his wife settled at Windsor, Connecticut. They brought with them those stern virtues and characteristics of their parent land which enabled them, with the men of their time, to triumph over the troubles and hardships endured in the settlement of the wilderness, and which, in the long line of their descendents, have been, upon many occasions, so greatly manifested. Their son, Abel, was born in 1710, and died at East Granby, Connecticut, in 1798, leaving a large family of children; of whom, Samuel, who was the sixth child, was born May 1st, 1752, and settled at East Granby, where he resided until June, 1803. At this time, he sold his possessions at that place and emigrated to Aurora, in the state of Ohio. He went overland with all his family, consisting of himself, his wife, his son Samuel with his wife and children, his other children, Walter, Julia, Chauncey, Rennsselaer, his son Oliver's wife, and David Loomis, conveyed in two large wagons, one drawn by a span of horses, the other by two yoke of oxen and a horse in the lead, one saddle-horse and two cows. Thus the train was made up, and with them they took farming utensils, domestic articles and provisions. They reached Aurora July 27th, 1803, having been forty-eight days on the route which is now traveled in half as many hours, and found his son Oliver and three hired men, who had gone there the previous February to prepare for them. A clearing had been made and a log house erected, and the pioneer, with his family around him, began the great work of aiding in the development of the mighty West. Such men, the inheritors of sterling and manly New England virtues, were the very ones to plant the graces of our civilization, and the republicanism of our institutions, upon the virgin soil of the northwestern territory. Samuel Forward died in 1821, having filled many positions of importance, among them, that of judge

of Portage county; his counsel always being influential, and his character entitling him to universal respect.

Oliver Forward was born in December, 1780, and married Sally Granger of Suffield, Connecticut. He settled at Aurora, Ohio, in the spring of 1803, and resided there probably about six years, and then, through the influence of his brother-in-law, Erastus Granger of Buffalo, he moved to this place about the year 1809. Judge Granger, at that time, filled the position of post-master and collector of customs at Buffalo, and agent for the Indian tribes in Western New York. He had, before that, settled here, and took up a large tract of land, now, in part, embraced in Forest Lawn and the Park, and resided, until his death, at what was known as Flint Hill, a little west of the stone house erected in later years by his son, our esteemed fellow-citizen, Warren Granger. Judge Forward immediately assumed the duties of deputy collector and assistant post-master, which were of much importance, as this place was the great distributing office of the frontier. He was also appointed and acted as justice of the peace.

In 1811, Charles Townsend and George Coit, honorable names in the history of our city, came here as traders, bringing about twenty tons of merchandise—a heavy stock for that time—which was boated from Schenectady on the Mohawk river, carried across the short portage to Wood creek, and thence floated to Oswego and to Lewiston, carted around the Falls to Schlosser, and thence brought in boats up the Niagara river, to Buffalo. Judge Townsend furnished a paper before his death, from which the following facts in regard to the village at that early day are extracted.

“In 1811, Buffalo contained less than one hundred dwellings, and a population of some four or five hundred. The only public buildings were the old stone jail on Washington street, and an unfinished wooden court-house. A small wooden building, built and claimed by Doctor Cyrenius Chapin, near the southwest corner of Pearl and Swan streets, put up for a school-house, served also as a town hall, a church for all religious denominations, and indeed for all public purposes. Three taverns were kept; one by Joseph



Landon, on Exchange street, and occupying a part of the site of the Mansion House; another of more moderate pretensions, at the corner of Main and Seneca streets, by Raphael Cook; and the third by Gamaliel St. John, near the corner of Main and Court streets. The only merchants were Juba Storrs & Co., Grosvenor & Heacock, Eli Hart, and Isaac Davis; the first being located on the northwest corner of Washington and Exchange streets, and the others on Main, between South Division and Exchange streets. A mail from Albany brought once or twice a week, in a wooden spring lumber wagon, was opened by Oliver Forward, a justice of the peace. Judge Granger held the office of postmaster, and also that of collector of the port,—the latter an office rather of honor than of business or profit. The commerce of the lakes was small. I think that, at this time, there were only four or five small vessels on our side, and two or three merchantmen, besides two British armed vessels on the other. There was no harbor here. The mouth of the Buffalo creek was usually so much obstructed by a sand-bar that small vessels could but rarely enter, and even canoes were sometimes shut out, and footmen walked dry shod across the mouth. Vessels were loaded and unloaded at a wharf near Bird Island, at Black Rock."

Before 1811, Judge Forward had built a small, one-story wooden dwelling, on Pearl street, in the rear of what is now No. 102, where he resided, and in a small addition thereto carried on the post-office and the business of collector of customs, as the deputy of Judge Granger. This was the central part of the village, where the news from all parts of the world was received and disseminated. He continued thus to act and live until the British and Indians, on the thirtieth day of December, 1813, burned the place, and massacred the defenceless women and children. The post-office was removed to Judge Granger's residence, where the public business was transacted until the following spring, when it became safe for the scattered inhabitants to return to the village. As soon as possible, in the year 1814, Judge Forward commenced the erection of a new dwelling on Pearl street. It was a double, two-story brick house, and was considered the most elegant residence in the place. The northern portion of it is yet standing, being the parlor of the house No. 102 Pearl street, the hall of which is of comparatively recent erection. In this part of his residence the

post-office was established, and, as Judge Granger had, before this, resigned the position of collector, to which Judge Forward succeeded, the business of collector of customs was also transacted there. For many years he was also treasurer of Niagara county, before Erie county was organized; and in the performance of the duties of these positions of trust, he manifested the greatest integrity.

The village of Buffalo was incorporated by the legislature, in April, 1813; and Eli Hart, Zenas W. Barker, Ebenezer Walden, Oliver Forward and Cyrenius Chapin were the trustees nominated by the act.

On the fourteenth of April, 1817, Judge Forward was appointed one of the judges of Niagara county; which position he held for many years. The original commission, in my possession, appoints Oliver Forward, Charles Townsend, Samuel Wilkeson, Gideon Frisby and Samuel Russell, judges of the county of Niagara; and among the justices for the territory of what is now Erie county, appear the names of James Cronk, afterwards sheriff, Joshua Henshaw and Jonathan Bowen, of Willink; Seth Abbott and Silas Patrick, of Hamburg; Amos Smith and John Hill, of Eden; Frederick Richmond, of Concord; James Sheldon, Ezra St. John and Alexander Hitchcock, of Buffalo; and Otis R. Hopkins, of Clarence; men who were prominently identified with the early history of our county.

For many years Judge Forward was a director of the Bank of Niagara, and at one time was called upon by all interested in the bank to take the position of cashier, which he accepted; the expectation being that his name and influence might, in some way, retrieve the fortunes of that institution.

Early in 1817, Judge Forward, then being collector of the port, was authorized by the treasury department to purchase a site for a light-house; and, after some negotiations with Joseph Ellicott, the agent of the Holland Land Company, selected the point where the residence of the light-house keeper now stands, that being, at the time, as stated in the correspondence, near



the outlet of Buffalo creek. The price paid was three hundred and fifty dollars, which was advanced by him in order to hasten the negotiation; and contracts were let for the building of the light-house, and an adjacent building for the residence of the keeper. His letter of December 26th, 1818, to the department, states, that in obedience to directions received by him, he had notified Mr. John E. Skaats of his appointment as keeper, and that in pursuance thereof he had taken charge of it without a moment's delay. He also adds, that the light-house and building were completed on the first of the preceding November, and, as a light was at that time an important aid in navigating the lake, he had employed Mr. George W. Fox to take charge until a keeper was appointed. These incidents are only mentioned as being matters of local history, of sufficient moment to be recorded.

The project of a grand canal, to unite the waters of Lake Erie with those of the Hudson river at Albany, began in those years to receive universal attention. The citizens of Buffalo, at an early day, appreciated the importance of their village, with reference to its being the proper and natural western terminus of the canal. Naturally enough, they looked forward with solicitude to the accomplishment of this event, which would render this place the Emporium of the West. After the determination of the state authorities that the canal should be constructed, and which was not arrived at until after a struggle, great and powerful influences, not only in the canal board, but of some of the most distinguished politicians on the frontier, were at work to locate the termination at Black Rock. That seemed to be the place designed by nature, being the very outlet of the lakes, and so situated upon the Niagara river that a safe and commodious harbor, when reached, was provided for all the commerce that could ever float upon our inland seas. This view was taken by many disinterested persons in authority, and strongly urged by Peter B. Porter and others who had made large investments at Black Rock, and

whose political influence was commanding. The only way the argument could be met, was by actual demonstration that a harbor, easier of access and equally commodious, could be created at Buffalo. It must be remembered, that the mouth of Buffalo creek was generally closed by a bar of sand, and vessels never entered, but received and discharged their cargoes from lighters. Few believed that any means could be devised whereby an entrance could be created, which could be relied upon for durability; and if this was so, no reasonable hope could be entertained that the canal would be extended to this point. The history of that crisis, in which the subject of our memoir was so conspicuous an actor, has been told in the sketches furnished by Judge Wilkeson to the *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*, the main features of which will more faithfully relate it, than the effort of any one now living.

In April, 1818, at the instance of the citizens of Buffalo, an act of the legislature was passed, authorizing the survey of the creek at the expense of the County of Niagara, which then embraced it, with reference to determining the feasibility of constructing a harbor; and William Peacock made the survey in the following summer, gratuitously. Although the report was favorable, neither the general government nor the State would assume the work. But the latter, in 1819, by law agreed to loan twelve thousand dollars for its construction, on being secured by bond and mortgage for its re-payment.

Oliver Forward, Charles Townsend, George Coit and Samuel Wilkeson gave the requisite security in the early part of 1820; and the pier was forthwith commenced. It was prosecuted and finished under the supervision of Judge Wilkeson, in 1821, in two hundred and twenty-one working days, and extended into the lake for about eighty rods, into twelve foot water. Every person in the place seems to have been agitated by, and to have participated in the projected improvement, and it was carried forward earnestly, and with that rare determination which bends to no adverse circumstances, and always wins suc-



cess or glory. Discouragements clustered around them in vain. It seems marvelous that such an undertaking was persevered in, amid the jeers of neighbors and the buffets of adversity, by the people of an inconsiderable town, who were not aided by experience, nor stimulated by the eye of general observation. The narrative is worthy of DeFoe. The make-shifts and substitutes for the unattainable machinery they needed, were most ingenious. And, though they encountered gravel where sand only was supposed to be, and storms often jeopardized and sometimes nearly destroyed their labors, they were not to be deterred.

When all seemed successfully completed, the first steamboat of the lakes, the *Walk-in-the-water*, having been lost, and her owners having determined to build a second,—the old *Superior*,—the building of it was nearly secured to Black Rock and lost to Buffalo, and was gained for the latter only by the giving of a stringent judgment bond by nearly all its responsible citizens, conditioned to pay to the steamboat company one hundred and fifty dollars for every day's detention of the boat in the creek after the first of May, by harbor obstruction. The boat was built in our creek in 1822, and ready to enter the lake in the spring of 1823. The completion of the harbor, such as it was, had given force to the general considerations in favor of continuing the canal to Buffalo; and the decision of the canal board to that effect was published in the report of 1823, to the great joy of its careworn and anxious inhabitants. But their joy was damped, and they were suddenly summoned to a renewal of their labors. The spring freshet, which was to perfect the harbor entrance by expelling all obstructions and thus give egress to the *Superior*, encountered a huge body of anchored ice, and being repelled by it, formed an eddy, and whirled large beds of sand and gravel into the channel, reducing its depth to three feet and a half, for a full hundred yards. And yet, on the first day of May, the voluntary subscriptions and exertions of the citizens had re-opened it, and the *Superior* floated through, into the lake; the bond was cancelled, and the

title of Buffalo to consideration as the future great City of the Lakes, was established.

Before this was accomplished, it was evident that some master mind must be selected to represent our village in the councils of the State at Albany; and, in 1819, Oliver Forward was elected to the assembly, as a delegate from the district containing Chautauqua, Cattaraugus and Niagara counties; in which latter, Erie county was then embraced. He entered the house at a period of great political excitement. The project of the Erie canal was not then fully determined, and was opposed by the elements then arrayed, with bitter hostility, against De Witt Clinton, the friend and champion of the measure. Judge Forward, as was expected, sustained the canal policy with great zeal and influence, and with that effective and patient policy which was characteristic of his nature. He was the compeer of great men in that remarkable session. John C. Spencer was speaker; and such men as Elisha Williams, of Hudson, Peter Schuyler, of Albany, Erastus Root, of Delaware, Abraham Bockes and Thomas J. Oakley, of Dutchess, Nathaniel Merriam, of Lewis, Jonas Earll, Jr., of Onondaga, and John A. King, of Queens, renowned as statesmen and orators and jurists, exercised commanding influence. Not only in the legislature was Judge Forward enabled to sustain the canal policy with success, but he labored with the officers of State, and with all men whose support was of moment. His correspondence reached all quarters, freighted with arguments and persuasions such as a man of superior intellect and a judicial turn of mind could adduce in favor of the great work; and his record was of such a character, that his constituents determined to retain him at Albany, and he was elected senator in the spring of 1820. Then came the session of the senate in the fall of 1820, and the sessions of 1821 and 1822, during which he maintained a conspicuous position, and faithfully accomplished the great objects of his mission. It is not too much to say of his course in the state legislature, that, upon every occasion, he was found to be



the warm supporter of all measures that appeared to be for the general public good, and which promoted the cause of morality and education, and the interests of the industrial classes. More effectual as a writer than as a debater, his sound judgment and the power of urging his opinions made his counsels influential; and his great integrity prevailed, where more brilliant men would have met with disappointment.

The canal board, in 1823, finally decided upon continuing the canal to Buffalo; and when the harbor was completed in May of that year, as before related, the great work of fixing the destiny of this city was accomplished. It is useless to speak of our obligations to such men as Forward, and Wilkeson, and Townsend, and Coit, and others of our citizens who labored incessantly, and at the peril of all their property, to ensure that result. We acknowledge them with gratitude; and though the tale of their patient labors and untiring efforts may be thrice told, we should never weary in the recital.

At the close of the session of 1822, on his return to Buffalo, Judge Forward was again elected chairman of the board of trustees of the village, as a mark of confidence and respect; in which position he continued to exercise his watchful care over the growing interests of the place. He was re-elected a trustee of the village, at the annual elections in 1823 and 1824, and chosen chairman of the board; that being the highest position his fellow-citizens could confer upon him.

The contract for constructing the section of the canal from Little Buffalo creek to Black Rock having been entered into, and preparations made for actually commencing the work, the occasion was deemed by the citizens here to be of so much moment, that it was resolved it should be celebrated by proper formalities. Friday, August 9th, 1822, was the day appointed by the contractors to commence their labors; and on that day the citizens of our village and of the adjacent country united in the very interesting ceremonies so appropriate to the occasion. They assembled at the Eagle tavern, about nine o'clock,

and marched in handsome order through the village, preceded by martial music, to the place where the canal was to terminate, and first to receive into its bosom the waters of Lake Erie. This point was where the Commercial street bridge now stands. Here the national flag was hoisted, and a cannon planted upon an eminence at a little distance from the interesting spot.

When order had been restored, the Rev. Mr. Squires, the Presbyterian clergyman of the place, addressed the Throne of Grace in a prayer peculiarly appropriate; after which the Rev. Mr. Galusha, in a short, but neat and animated speech, referred to the importance of the work then to be inaugurated, and predicted great results therefrom. Then the ceremony of breaking ground was performed by several of the oldest citizens of the place. Judge Forward, as the chairman of the board of trustees and the representative of the village, planted the first spade in the earth and raised the first soil, and then Colonel Chapin, Judge Barker and Judge Walden joined, after which all the principal citizens, and many respectable strangers, with plows and spades, united in the commencement of the grand canal. The procession then moved down the line of the canal about half a mile, where the citizens partook of the hospitality of the contractors, and then, returning, finally dispersed, amid resounding cheers. A contemporary writer says, that on this interesting occasion all were united in the same interest, the same feeling, the same sentiment. Clintonians and Bucktails, the Kremlin aristocracy and those opposed, democrats and federalists, all joined hands and exchanged fraternal congratulations. Political feuds and animosities were lost in the grandeur of the scene, and nothing was heard but one universal expression of heartfelt approbation.

In the fall of the year 1825, the canal was fully completed, and it only remained to dedicate it to the world, by ceremonies suitable to the occasion. Committees of conference on the part of New York and Albany taking the lead, a general plan of celebration was agreed upon and concurred in, by a confer-



ence of committees of Rochester, Lockport and Buffalo. An important feature in the general arrangements for the celebration, was the stationing of cannon from Buffalo to Sandy Hook, to announce the departure of the first boat from Lake Erie to tide-water, and to answer the purpose of a continuous salute. On the evening of the twenty-fifth of October, 1825, the entire canal, from Buffalo to Albany, was in a navigable condition. Buffalo, then a village of only twenty-five hundred inhabitants, from its position at the head of navigation, was, of course, to lead off in the ceremonies, and well did the germ of a now great city acquit itself. The New York committee that arrived here on the evening of the twenty-fifth, stated, in their report, that they found everything in readiness for the commencement of the celebration. At nine o'clock on the morning of the twenty-sixth of October, a procession was formed in front of the court-house. It consisted of the governor and lieutenant-governor of the state, the New York delegation, delegations from villages along the whole line of the canal, various societies of mechanics with appropriate banners, and citizens generally; the whole escorted by the Buffalo band, and Captain Rathbun's rifle company. The procession moved down Main street to the head of the canal, where the pioneer boat, the *Seneca Chief*, was in waiting. The governor and lieutenant-governor, and the committees, including that of Buffalo, were received on board. The whole, standing upon the deck, united in mutual introductions and congratulations. Jesse Hawley, in behalf of the Rochester committee, made a short address, which was properly replied to by Judge Forward, on behalf of the authorities and citizens of Buffalo. All things being in readiness, the signal gun was fired, and continuing from gun to gun, in succession, in one hour and twenty minutes the citizens of New York were apprised that a boat was departing from the foot of Lake Erie, and was on its way, traversing a new path to the Atlantic ocean. The *Seneca Chief* led off in fine style, drawn by four gray horses, fancifully caparisoned. Three

boats, the *Perry*, *Superior* and *Buffalo*, followed, and the fleet moved from the dock under a salute from the rifle company, accompanied by music from the band. The procession then moved to the court-house, where an address was delivered by Sheldon Smith, Esq., and a public dinner succeeded; the festivities of the day being closed by a splendid ball at the Eagle Tavern.

The correspondence of Judge Forward with Governor Clinton and other distinguished men of our state, from 1818 to 1826, in regard to the canal policy, and also as to its termination here, and as to our harbor, and the letters to him in answer, have, in part, been preserved, and show that he was constantly urging the fair consideration of the claims of our village, and setting forth all the arguments and facts that could be adduced in support of those measures. At this day, surrounded with all the evidences of wealth and civilization, one rises from the perusal of such papers, almost with a doubt that it could be possible, that, but little more than fifty years ago, the great men of the time were fearful lest the work would never be accomplished. It seems more like some fairy tale than a reality, and illustrates on every page the patriotism and devotion of those who so successfully carried the measure to a conclusion. In all this correspondence, it appears that Governor Clinton was at all times friendly to the interests of Buffalo, as against Black Rock; believing that this point was in every way better adapted to be the Emporium of the Lakes; and, as one of the canal board, lent his powerful influence in support of the claims of our citizens.

These relations of the history of the Erie canal, have been given for the reason, that the life and labors of Oliver Forward were for so many years directed to the accomplishment of that great work. How earnestly, and with what self-denial, he devoted his services to that end; how patiently, but firmly, he encountered the determined opposition of rival and powerful interests, with arguments and persuasions in place of invectives;



with what statesmanlike abilities he made use of political power, are matters that have almost been forgotten in our generation. But, when cotemporaneous history is examined, and the public journals of the time and private papers and correspondence consulted, it will be found that he was one of the most active and influential men of his day, and contributed as much as any other to the success of measures which laid the foundation of the opulence and splendor of our city.

In the year 1825, it will be remembered, General La Fayette visited this country, and was received as the nation's guest with the most distinguished consideration. He arrived at this place from the west, on the steamboat *Superior*, on the fourth day of June, 1825, and, as Judge Forward was the one who addressed him on behalf of our citizens, it is proper to recall this item of local history, by giving the account published in a paper of that time.

“General La Fayette arrived in this village on Saturday, about two o'clock in the afternoon, and was immediately escorted to the Eagle Tavern, by a detachment of Captain Vosburgh's company of cavalry, and the Frontier Guards under Captain Rathbun. He was preceded by the committee of arrangements and his suite. On his arrival, he was conducted with his suite, by the committee, to an elegant pavilion, erected in front of the house, where he was met by the corporation; in whose behalf, and that of the citizens of the village, Oliver Forward, Esq., addressed him, as follows: ●

“GENERAL—In behalf of the citizens of this village and its vicinity, I have the honor of welcoming you among them, and of tendering you that regard, which has been again and again reiterated from the center to the remotest extremities of the Union. This regard we are unable to testify to you, amidst the splendor and magnificence of a state or national Emporium; but, to you, we are aware, it will not be less acceptable, if presented in the unimposing forms of republican simplicity. We are not less mindful than are the whole people of this extended Empire, of the services you have rendered our common country, nor less conscious of the gratification the patriot and the philanthropist must feel in passing the declivities of life, carrying with him the richest of all earthly reward,—a nation's gratitude. But few of us were among those who participated with you in the toils and dangers of the revolution which established not only the liberties of the confederacy, but what the

world had never before seen, a welcome, a happy and a protected home for the oppressed of all nations. But we alike revere the memory of the brave, and cherish with the same zeal, the principles for which you and our fathers bled; and, with all the grateful recollections which a love of liberty can inspire, of the voluntary sacrifices you have made in the support of her cause, we beg you to accept the humble tribute of our respect, in conjunction with what has been and will continue to be proffered, not only by every citizen of the American nation, but by every friend of liberty and of mankind."

It may well be questioned whether a more dignified and happy address was presented to La Fayette during his sojourn in this country.

The narrative further states, that a suitable reply to Judge Forward was made, and at five o'clock the General and company sat down to an excellent dinner, provided by Mr. Rathbun; the evening was spent pleasantly, and the village handsomely illuminated.

The last public services of Judge Forward were rendered at the solicitation of the citizens of Buffalo, in connection with a revision of the charter. The city was organized in the spring of 1832; but it was soon evident that in order to subserve the public interests to the desired degree, an extension of many of the powers granted was needed. On behalf of the citizens generally, a committee of fifteen was appointed at a meeting called to consider the matters in question, of whom Judge Forward was one, as a representative from the first ward, and the common council added five aldermen to the committee. He was elected chairman by common consent, and the labors of the committee were extended through the year. During this time, many important provisions were originated, and many revised and improved, and a foundation laid for a charter that gave ample power to preserve public order, regulate and improve the highways, and establish our common schools. The last named subject was one that greatly interested Judge Forward. One of his papers refers particularly to this matter, and a few extracts from it may well be presented as an illustration of the vigor and terseness of his style, at the



same time illustrating with what thoughtfulness and ability he considered questions of public moment. He says:

“At the request of intelligent and respectable citizens, I have prepared a series of numbers, addressed to the mayor and common council of the city of Buffalo, upon the subject of various improvements in said city, and also upon the subject of powers granted by the charter, which, by construction, may be made too extensive, and are consequently too unguarded and indefinite in their character. In addition to this, I have taken a brief view of powers, which should be granted by a legislative act, to more effectually preserve public order, and to make more extensive, permanent and accommodating provisions for the support of common schools. That our city charter may be beneficially improved, by salutary additions and improvements, there can be no doubt in the mind of any intelligent man, who will take upon himself the trouble of carefully examining its provisions, and after a full consideration of the subject, I have no doubt that, without adding to the public burdens, a city fund may be provided for the education of the poor in common schools, which should be under the control of the city authorities. I cannot forbear remarking that the subject of common schools is one of vital importance to the interests of the whole community. In them, the children of the poor are educated,—indeed, they are general sources of early instruction, and upon them will depend, in a great measure, the morals and the intelligence of each succeeding generation.”

But the time had almost come when the labors of Oliver Forward were to cease. In the summer of 1832, he suffered from an attack of cholera, and never recovered his physical strength, but gradually failed, until he died in April, 1833; thus closing a life which had been almost entirely devoted to the public service.

Mrs. Forward died in December, 1831, and, of several children, one only is now living—Mrs. Julia M. Sterling—the wife of Ambrose S. Sterling, a former merchant of this city. Several of the brothers of Judge Forward have been distinguished in our national councils. Walter Forward, of Pittsburg, was well known as one of the first lawyers of his State, and served his constituents as a representative in Congress, in 1822. In 1837, he bore a prominent part in the Pennsylvania convention to reform the state constitution. In March, 1841,

President Harrison named him first comptroller of the treasury, which post he held until he was appointed secretary of the treasury by President Tyler. On retiring from that position he resumed his practice at the bar, until appointed by President Taylor as minister to Denmark; and, on his return home, was made president judge of the district court, which office he held at the time of his death, in 1852.

Chauncey Forward was born February 4th, 1793, and went to Pittsburg about 1809, with his brother Walter, where he was educated and became a lawyer, and settled at Somerset, Pennsylvania. He was a member of the state legislature, and also of Congress for three terms, from 1825 to 1831. One of his daughters married Hon. Jeremiah S. Black, who was the attorney-general during the administration of President Buchanan. Rennssalear and Dryden, two younger brothers, were educated for the bar, and gave great promise of future excellence, but untimely deaths prevented the realization of the high hopes entertained by their friends.

In preparing this memorial, use has been made of the contemporary newspapers, which are generally reliable in their statements of facts, and of *Turner's History of the Hollana Purchase*; as well as a remarkably well-written paper compiled by the lamented Guy H. Salisbury, contained in the Directory of 1847. Particular obligation is due to Rev. James Remington, of Lancaster, in this county, the father of our county clerk, who was the brother-in-law of Judge Forward, and intimately associated with him from about the year 1811, for many years, in the discharge of the duties of the public offices held by him, and who has furnished many particulars of which no record existed.

In person, Judge Forward was of medium stature, but portly; of grave and dignified presence; one whose imposing appearance would have been marked in any assembly of men. His mind was judicial in its tone and character; always calm and



temperate, dealing with facts and seeking by logical methods to convince others; modest as to self-assertion, but firm and resolute in seeking the ends and purposes he knew were right and justifiable. Above all, he had that mastery of those with whom he became associated, which compelled acquiescence in his opinions; and the gift of wisely marshalling the abilities of others who joined with him in the prosecution of important purposes. He guided the energies of one and availed himself of the acquirements of another; the learning of one and the influence of another were made to contribute to success, while all looked to him for wise and prudent counsel.

The life of Oliver Forward is but another illustration of the fact that it is to circumstances beyond his control, more than to his own works, that a man is generally indebted for his position, and for the character of the memories that survive him. Had he laid the foundation of a fortune in this city, and died, surrounded by a large circle of descendants and relatives who might now worthily represent his name and wealth, how much larger a place in public remembrance would he have filled! Let us not withhold the due tributes of respect and gratitude. Rather let us, by the memorial of his life, preserve the just record of his fame, so that his name and acts and deeds, so indissolubly connected with our welfare and prosperity, may continue to be the objects of public regard.

# THE GRAIN ELEVATORS OF BUFFALO.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, MARCH 13, 1865.

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BY JOSEPH DART.\*

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HAVING been invited to present to you some facts and recollections in regard to the introduction of Grain Elevators at this port, I would respectfully submit the following:

This subject has a bearing, not only on the citizens of this community, but also upon an immensely larger number of people, whose grain productions are sent, and whose bread supplies are received through our hands. In fact, whatever facilitates the movement of bread-stuffs, directly affects one of the first interests of mankind. It might, perhaps, be said, that the ready production of food is a question of greater importance than its easy transportation. The first great care of men commonly, is to produce food, not to know what to do with it when produced. The road from hand to mouth is short and easy enough with men at first, but as society grows, and division of labor is made, producers and consumers of food become widely separated, and the question of transportation becomes exceedingly important. When the hands of producers and the mouths of consumers are distant by the space of half a continent and even

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\* Died, September 28th, 1879, in his 81st year.



half a globe, the road from hand to mouth is a long one, and oftentimes "a hard road to travel." Whatever smooths the roughness of that road cheapens food, and benefits mankind.

Some of the first inventors have devoted themselves to the various questions which this important interest has raised. It is somewhat noticeable that the three great mechanical minds who gave to our country, near the commencement of the present century, so great an impulse, not only in the leading mechanic arts, but, also, through them, almost every material and moral interest of the land and the world,—Fulton, Whitney and Evans,—appear to have been chiefly useful in the three great interests of transportation, clothing and food. To the question of transportation, Robert Fulton directed his thoughts, and by one stroke of success, he shortened the length of all rivers, and the width of all seas and lakes, and brought producers and consumers everywhere into easy and cheap communication, as we see to-day in the rapidity with which grain is hastened forward across our lakes to the waiting and hungry East. Eli Whitney, by the invention of the "cotton gin," made the culture of upland cotton profitable, thus giving a new staple to near half a continent, and greatly cheapening the fabric most used as clothing throughout the world.

Oliver Evans, who deserves a place by the side of these distinguished men, was the person, who, more than any other man, simplified and perfected the processes by which grain is converted into food. Among his valuable improvements for the manufacture of flour, were the Elevator and Conveyor, inventions designed only for use in flouring mills, but which have been adapted, by an improvement originating here, for the easy and rapid transfer of grain in its movement towards a market. The Elevator and Conveyor thus applied, are the simple means by which the immense and innumerable cargoes of grain, constantly arriving at this port, are readily transferred from vessels into canal-boats or cars, and quickly sent forward on their eastern course. It is now in use for this purpose at all the principal

grain dépôts in the land, and has become absolutely essential to the economical handling of large quantities of grain.

Before stating, as far as I can, the way in which this new application of the Elevator came to be made, it may not be inappropriate to present some facts in regard to the first introduction of the Elevator into mills.

Prior to 1785, the universal custom in manufacturing flour, was to take the meal, as it came from the mill-stones, and hoist it into the bolting room by hand. The flour was also taken from the bolt to the drying and packing rooms in the same way. In 1812, when there was an effort to set aside Mr. Evans' claim, as the inventor of the Elevator, Mr. Niles, editor of *Niles' Weekly Register*, stated that the practice in his boyhood, at the celebrated Brandywine mills at Wilmington, Delaware, near which place he was born and spent his boyhood, was to hoist the meal to the bolt, in the upper part of the building, in large tubs, by means of a rope and pulley worked by hand. A man was also required to feed the hopper which supplied the bolt. In this way, every single step in the process of flouring grain required separate attendance, and also involved in the frequent handling of the flour in such cumbrous methods, considerable loss by waste.

In 1780, Oliver Evans completed his apprenticeship and joined his brothers, who were carrying on a small mill. He had already shown great taste for mechanical pursuits, studying by night by the light of burning shavings when refused candles by his employer, and preparing himself, by thorough mastery of his trade, to write, as he did some years afterwards, "*The Young Miller's Guide and Mill-wright's Companion*," a book which is still a standard work on the matters of which it treats. It was not long after he commenced business, before he had completed the several improvements in mill machinery, on which his fame chiefly rests. Among these, as already stated, was the Elevator, a simple apparatus with which all are now familiar, consisting merely of a series of buckets attached



to a leather or canvas and rubber belt revolving upon pulleys. At the time already mentioned, when the attempt was made to break Mr. Evans' claim as patentee of the Elevator, it was alleged that a Mr. Stroud, a neighbor of Mr. Evans, was the originator of it, and that it was suggested to his mind, by observing that a buckle of a band in a wheat cleaner, caught up, on each revolution, and carried over with it a few kernels of grain. On enquiry, however, it was ascertained that Mr. Stroud never thought of an Elevator till Mr. Evans had talked with him on the subject, and that Mr. Evans assured him of the possibility of the thing, before the time when the action of the buckle on the cleaner strap had been observed.

Another of the improvements, introduced at the same time, was the Conveyor, for removing flour or grain in a horizontal direction, to the point where the elevator or bolt could receive it. Mr. Evans also contrived a very ingenious and almost automatic process, by which the flour was kept in motion and exposed to the air till thoroughly dry and ready for packing. Previously the custom had been to kiln-dry the grain, making the husk so brittle, that in grinding it became mixed with the meal, and the small particles would pass through the superfine bolt with the flour. By these various improvements it was estimated that the saving, in the increased yield of superfine flour from a given quantity of grain, amounted to fifty cents on every barrel of flour produced.

And yet it is remarkable with what extreme difficulty Mr. Evans brought his inventions into general use. He traveled through Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, offering his improvements *gratis* to the first party in each county who would introduce them, and found scarcely an individual willing to accept his offers. The question usually asked him was, "Have your neighbors, the Brandywine millers, adopted them?" He was obliged to say "No," which generally finished his prospects for securing a trial. After long importunity a delegation of these millers waited on Mr. Evans, and gave him

their reply in the following words: "Oliver, we have had a meeting, and agreed if thou wilt furnish all the materials, and thy own boarding, and come thyself to set up thy machinery in one of our mills, thee may come and try it, and if it answers a valuable purpose we will pay thy bill; but if it does not answer, thee must take it all out again, and leave the mill just as thee finds it, at thine own expense."

They knew he was too poor to comply with their terms.

When he had introduced his improvements into his own mill, and they were working so admirably that he could tend it easier alone than he had done before with two men and a boy, he invited these millers to come and see his inventions work. It happened the day they came he was engaged not only in tending his mill alone, but also in making hay in an adjoining clover lot. As he saw the company approaching, he quietly withdrew to his meadow and went to work with his hay. He thought, when his visitors went into the mill and saw it in full operation, cleaning, grinding and bolting, and no human hand near, they would be convinced his improvements were of some use. They went over the mill by themselves, and then came out to him with the request that he would go in and explain the process. He went in with them, but took care to say it was "an uncommon busy day" with him, as he had to tend mill and make hay too. He showed them his mill, however, and, as the account states, "they saw that the Elevators and Conveyors brought the meal from the two pairs of stones, and the flour from the bolts to the apparatus called the hopper-boy, which spread it over the floor, stirring, fanning and gathering it, and attending to the bolting hoppers at the same time, without the help of a single hand, in any part of the process;" and when the inventor expected they would believe the testimony of their own eyes, one of them exclaimed, "It will not do, it cannot do, it is impossible that it should do." The delegation went off, and reported that "the whole contrivance was a set of rattle traps, not worth the notice of men of common sense."



A few years afterwards, when it was proved in Ellicott's mills, near Baltimore, which turned out three hundred and twenty-five barrels of flour a day, that Mr. Evans' improvements made a saving of some five thousand dollars a year, in cost of attendance, and of fifty cents a barrel in increased yield of superfine flour, amounting in that one mill in a single year, to over thirty-seven thousand dollars clear saving, the Brandywine millers concluded that their neighbor's "set of rattle traps" had rather an agreeable rattle after all. But no sooner was the immense value of these improvements manifest, than these same men combined to destroy Mr. Evans' claim as the patentee; and when, after oppressive litigation, the inventor's rights were sustained, these liberal gentlemen contrived to avoid responsibility themselves, and a comparatively poor man, whom they had adroitly put forward, was left to pay the bill, to whom Mr. Evans, from motives of humanity, remitted nearly half the amount.

While Mr. Evans was struggling to introduce his Elevator, as an improvement in the manufacture of flour, on the banks of the Delaware, about the year 1785, he had little idea, that at Buffalo creek, in the distant wilderness, at the foot of Lake Erie, then without a white inhabitant on its banks, the wants of a vast trade, at that time entirely unknown, would give rise, some fifty years later, to a new application of his Elevator, and that another effort would then be necessary, in order to introduce it, as a *commercial* rather than a *manufacturing* appliance, for facilitating the transshipment of grain.

In noticing this new use of the Elevator, it is worthy of remark, that some of the most useful inventions have not been discoveries of new principles or methods of mechanical action, but new applications of methods and principles already known. Some inventions consist of entirely new ideas. Such was Arkwright's invention of spinning by rollers; a thing probably never thought of in the history of the world, till it entered his mind. Such were some of James Watt's discoveries in per-

fecting the steam engine. The invention of the high-pressure steam engine by Oliver Evans, who has been styled the "Watt of America," was another instance of a new principle, successfully introduced.

But, on the other hand, Fulton's steamboat involved no new principle. It was only a new application of a force already familiar. So Evans' Elevator was an old idea. In the efforts which were made to dispossess him of the fruits of his improvements, it was successfully shown that the idea of raising substances by a revolving chain of buckets, was not original with him.

Thomas Jefferson wrote a very learned paper against Evans, in which he quoted from ancient scientific books, showing that this was a method of lifting which had come down from a very remote antiquity. Travelers in Egypt had seen rude wheels revolving on the banks of the Nile, over which passed ropes hung with buckets, lifting water for the irrigation of the soil. Mr. Jefferson argued that it made no difference in principle, that the ancient Elevators consisted of circular buckets, strung through their centers, on a connecting rope or chain. The attachment of the cups to a leather strap was not deserving a patent, for a strip of hempen webbing would do as well. Nor was it material, that Mr. Evans' Elevator was used to raise wheat and flour, rather than water; for, in that case, Mr. Jefferson argued, it would require a new patent, if anyone should use an Elevator to lift corn or peas, and should claim a sole right to that use. It was also proven that a Mr. Martin, of Maryland, had actually constructed, and some time used a *grain* Elevator attached to a seed-planter, and consisting of a leather strap, one and a half inches wide, armed with little thimble-like cups, each lifting three or four kernels of seed, and carrying them over the upper roller, eighteen inches higher than the lower one, and dropping them regularly into the furrow in the soil, over which the planter was drawn.

Yet the ingenuity and learning of Mr. Jefferson, and of the wealthy millers who sought his aid, failed to invalidate Mr.



Evans' rights as a patentee. It was justly held, that though the Elevator was not a new idea, Evans was the first person who had made a successful application of it to the manufacture of flour, and his right to the sole use of that application was sustained. An inventor's merit consists not merely in conceiving an idea of a machine, but also in overcoming the practical difficulties in its successful operation.

Robert Fulton's fame as a benefactor to his race is not destroyed by showing that other men were before him in propelling boats by steam. Nearly twenty years before Fulton succeeded, James Rumsey moved a steamboat on the Potomac, near Sheppardstown, at the rate of five miles an hour. John Fitch, at Philadelphia, about the same time, built a steamboat which ran eight miles an hour. But Fitch's power was applied by upright paddles worked at the sides of the boat, and Rumsey took in a charge of water through an opening in the keel, and shot it out again near the rudder, after the manner of a syringe. Fulton's application of steam to paddle-wheels was the first practical success in this line.

In view of such facts as these, the statement is made with some confidence, that the first practical success in handling grain by machinery for commercial purposes, a success which was attained in this city, was a step in advance.

It was a step in advance, because it was an entirely new use of the Elevator. It was not new to raise grain into a mill by an Elevator. This had been done from wagons, near fifty years previous to the erection of my Elevator, in 1842-3. I am informed, by our worthy townsman, Mr. John T. Noye, that, in 1824, his father rented a flouring mill on Bronx river, near King's Bridge, New York, for the manufacture of flour; attached to which was an Elevator for the unloading of grain from vessels, for the use of the mill. Mr. Noye thinks this mill was erected about ten or twelve years previous to its occupation by his father. But the commercial Elevator grew out of the wants of the grain-shipping interests of this port.

It was not till after 1830, that grain, in any considerable quantities, began to pass through this place to the markets of the East; and, in 1835, at which time Ohio was the only state sending us grain, the entire annual receipts were only one hundred and twelve thousand bushels, including all kinds of grain. From that time, however, there began to be a very rapid increase, rising from half a million bushels in 1836, to near two million bushels in 1841; an increase of four hundred per cent. in five years. It began to be evident that there was to be a very speedy and immense increase in the future grain business of this port. It seemed to me, as I reflected on the amazing extent of the grain producing regions of the Prairie West, and the favorable position of Buffalo for receiving their products, that the eastward movements of grain through this port, would soon exceed anything the boldest imagination had conceived.

The report of Hon. Samuel B. Ruggles, Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, in the New York Assembly of 1838, had spoken in the most hopeful and confident terms of the future growth of the West, and the commerce which was destined to be carried on through this state, to and from tidewater and the lakes. His language was deemed, by many, extravagant, and his ideas visionary.

A series of letters in 1839, on internal improvements and the commerce of the West, by General Dearborn, of Massachusetts, temporarily residing in this city, took the same encouraging view.

None of these statements, however, were equal to the results which a few years produced. Mr. Ruggles has since declared that his predictions, which were considered as extravagant, were considerably below his confident expectations, but that he did not dare to put his figures as high as he felt he might, and as time has since shown he could have done, for fear his views would be altogether rejected as unworthy of trust. These estimates of the growth of our inland commerce bring to mind the remark of Mr. Burke, on the population of the American



Colonies, in 1775. "State the numbers as high as we will," said he, "while the debate continues, the exaggeration ends."

It seemed very clear to me, that such an increasing trade demanded largely increased facilities for its accommodation at this point.

Already, with the near two million bushels received in 1841, unavoidable delays in the transshipment at this port were frequent, and were the occasion of much vexation and expense. Up to this time, the universal method of transfer was to raise the grain from the hold of the vessel, in barrels, by tackle and block, to weigh it with hopper and scales swung over the hatchway of the canal boat, or carry it into the warehouse in bags or baskets, on men's shoulders. This method, even at this present day, is largely in use in the cities of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Boston, which illustrates the force of habit; as a small army of men may be seen with baskets on their shoulders, unloading vessels, at immense cost of muscle and time, to say nothing of pecuniary loss. Only ten or fifteen bushels were commonly weighed at a draft; and the most that could be accomplished in a day, with a full set of hands, was to transfer some eighteen hundred or two thousand bushels, and this only when the weather was fair. Everything was at a stand in bad weather; and, on an average, one-fourth of the time was lost by rain or high winds. The harbor was often crowded with vessels, waiting for a change of weather. In these circumstances, I determined, in 1841, to try steam power in the transfer of grain for commercial purposes.

There were various obstacles to the successful execution of such a plan, and predictions of failure were somewhat freely expressed. I believed, however, that I could build a warehouse, of large capacity for storage, with an adjustable Elevator and Conveyors, to be worked by steam; and so arranged as to transfer grain from vessels to boats or bins, with cheapness and dispatch. Amid many difficulties, discouragements and delays, I began the work of erecting the building on Buffalo creek, at the

junction of the Evans' ship canal, in the autumn of 1842, on the spot where now stands the stately Elevator of Hon. D. S. Bennett, which has risen, Phoenix-like, from the ashes of its parent. Indeed, the building I then erected may perhaps be called the parent, not only of the Bennett Elevator, but of all others; for I believe it was the first steam transfer and storage Elevator in the world. It was the first successful application of the valuable invention of Oliver Evans to the commercial purpose for which it is now extensively employed. It is, however, but justice to state, that an effort in this direction was made a short time previous, by Mahlon Kingman, Esq., then a forwarding merchant of this city, now deceased; and, that an Elevator designed to be operated by horse power, was constructed, in a warehouse previously built for ordinary storage purposes, on the Evans' ship canal; but I am informed by Mr. Charles W. Evans, whose warehouse was adjoining, that Mr. Kingman never unloaded a vessel with it, although he made the attempt. To illustrate his opinion, that the plan was impracticable, I will mention here, that a short time before my building was completed, Mr. Kingman, in passing it, said to me in a familiar manner, tapping me on the shoulder: "Dart, I am sorry for you; I have been through that mill; it won't do; remember what I say; Irishmen's backs are the cheapest Elevators ever built." Soon after my Elevator was in operation, he came to me, about two or three o'clock in the afternoon, to get two canal-boats loaded that day. I reminded him of the speech he wished me to remember. His reply was—"Dart, I find I did not know it all."

My experiment, from the very first working, was a decided and acknowledged success. Within a month after I started, a leading forwarder, who had confidently predicted that shippers could not afford to pay the charges of elevating by steam, came to me and offered double rates for accommodation, but my bins were all full. The great saving of time by the use of the Elevator was immediately seen. To give an instance that



occurs to my mind, the schooner John B. Skinner came into port, with four thousand bushels of wheat, early in the afternoon, and was discharged, received ballast of salt, and left the same evening; made her trip to Milan, Ohio, brought down a second cargo and discharged it; and, on her return to Milan, went out in company with vessels which came in with her on the first trip down, and which had but just succeeded in getting rid of their freight in the old way. In this case, the freight work of two vessels was done by one, and instances approaching this have not been uncommon. It had been said that eight hundred bushels an hour was the extent to which an Elevator could be driven, and grain correctly weighed. I began with buckets twenty-eight inches apart, holding about two quarts, and raised without difficulty a thousand bushels an hour. I soon put the buckets some twenty-two inches apart, and then sixteen or eighteen inches, till eighteen hundred or two thousand bushels an hour were raised. In some of the Elevators now in use, the buckets hold eight quarts and are only one foot apart, and will raise six or seven thousand bushels an hour, weighing it correctly. The storage of the first Elevator was fifty-five thousand bushels—its capacity was doubled three years after.

During the twenty-two years that have now elapsed, the rapidly increasing receipts of grain have made a demand for continually increasing facilities for its transfer and storage, and there are now twenty-seven Elevators, besides two floating Elevators; storing, some of them, six hundred thousand bushels, and all together fully six million bushels, and capable of moving in a single day, more than the entire annual receipts at this port at the time my Elevator was built. To give, at one view, an idea of the extent to which elevating facilities have been provided at this port, I annex a statement of all the Elevators that have been erected here, including those that have been destroyed by fire:\*

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\* For valuable statistical information in this paper, relative to receipts and transshipment of grain, I am indebted to Mr. E. H. Walker, commercial reporter of the Board of Trade in this city.

# *ELEVATORS OF BUFFALO.*

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Elevating Warehouses.	Capac. for Storage, bushels.	Transfer Capac. per day, bush.
Bennett (form. Dart; burnt and rebuilt, 1863,)..	600,000	96,000
Buffalo,.....	125,000	96,000
Coatsworth (transfer,) .....	40,000	50,000
Coburn (now C. J. Wells; burnt and rebuilt, 1863,)..	350,000	96,000
Corn Dock (burnt in 1865,).....		
1st City (burnt in 1859,).....		
2d City (burnt and rebuilt, 1866,).....	600,000	125,000
1st Evans (burnt in 1863,).....		
2d Evans (burnt in 1864; rebuilt, 1865,).....	300,000	97,000
Empire, .....	200,000	96,000
Erie Basin (at Buffalo and Lake Huron Road,)..	200,000	96,000
Exchange, .....	200,000	96,000
Excelsior (transfer,).....	30,000	96,000
Floating Elevators, 1 and 2,.....	30,000	192,900
Grain Dock (burnt in 1861,)... ..		
Hollister (burnt in 1859,)... ..		
Main Street (burnt in 1865; rebuilt, 1867,).....	225,000	
Marine (formerly Hatch,).....	200,000	168,000
Merchants', .....	30,000	96,000
New York & Erie (at Erie Railroad,).....	200,000	96,000
Reed (burnt in 1859,).....		
Reed (built in 1862,).....	200,000	96,000
Richmond (new, built in 1864,) .....	280,000	144,000
Sturges (burnt in 1866; rebuilt 1867,).....	350,000	100,000
Sternberg (two buildings, A and B,).....	350,000	96,000
Sterling (burnt and rebuilt, 1863,).....	150,000	96,000
Union (transfer,).....	40,000	96,000
Seymour & Wells,.....	125,000	96,000
Wilkeson (burnt 1863, and rebuilt,).....	280,000	96,000
Watson (built 1863,).....	600,000	288,000
Williams, .....	150,000	96,000
Total capacity, .....	5,855,000	2,700,900

The annual grain product of the partially developed Great West, has already attained a magnitude numbered by nearly one thousand millions of bushels, and the surplus moved eastward by the several routes to market, has during the last four years, ranged from eighty to one hundred and forty millions of bushels, and of this more than one-half has been received at Buffalo.

In 1862, about seventy millions of bushels of grain were passed through the Elevators at Oswego and Buffalo. This large amount of grain could not have been transferred at these points by the modes in use twenty-five years ago; and if it were possible to do it, the expense would have been augmented to more than twenty fold the present cost.



The annual saving in expense to lake commerce, by this simple, cheap and expeditious process for handling grain, can only be numbered by tens of millions of dollars.

The population of the Lake Basin states, has, during each ten years of the last thirty, been augmented in a ratio equal to fifty-five per cent. The present population exceeds nine millions; and if a corresponding ratio of increase shall be maintained during the remaining portion of this century, there will be, in the year 1900, a population of upwards of sixty millions, in the states bordering upon and commercially tributary to the great lakes..

The increase in the grain product of the West for the last thirty years, has been in a ratio equal to the increase in population. The cereal product of the West and Southwest, was, in 1860, about six hundred millions of bushels, against one hundred and sixty-six million bushels in 1840. If this ratio of increase shall be maintained during the remaining portion of the century, the grain product in the year 1900, will exceed two thousand five hundred millions of bushels. Of the surplus over and above the wants for domestic consumption, about fifteen per cent. has been forwarded to Eastern markets. Provided a like ratio of the surplus crop of the year 1900 is sent to market, then there will be a movement of five hundred millions of bushels. Not all the product of the gold mines of California will equal the value saved to the internal commerce of the Western and Northwestern states, by those labor-saving Elevators, with only the improvements in them now in use.

Oliver Evans had a religious idea, that he was raised up by Providence to confer important benefits on his fellow-men; and, certainly, could he now be aware how extensively his improvements are used, how wonderfully, by their means, trade has been extended, commerce increased, food cheapened, and the general welfare of mankind advanced, he would be satisfied that his laborious and perplexing life had not been in vain.

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# THE BUFFALO COMMON SCHOOLS.

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READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, JANUARY 23, 1863.

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BY O. G. STEELE.\*

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

YOU have done me the honor to request me to prepare a paper upon the History of the Public Schools of the city of Buffalo.

I have consented to do so from a sense of the duty which every member owes to the Society, to contribute to the general fund of local history such information as he may possess or can obtain.

A residence of thirty-five years in a city, the site of which was a wilderness fifty years ago, and when the little hamlet of 1813 was reduced to the single cottage of Mrs. St. John, must afford to any man with his eyes and ears open, many subjects connected with his own experience and observation, which are worthy of preservation.

It is the province of this Society, to gather the reminiscences of the early inhabitants of the city, as well as of those who, from ability or opportunity, have contributed in any manner to its growth, or have had any special identity with any of the works or institutions which constitute its greatness.

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\* Died, November 11th, 1879.



The early settlers of what is now the city of Buffalo were drawn here by the same motives which have actuated all mankind, since the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. It was to better their condition. The old states of New England, and the Atlantic border of New York and Pennsylvania, had so far increased after the Revolution, as to have what then seemed to be a redundant population. The young men of the first decade of the present century began to look abroad for some promised land, where they could find greater opportunities for settling themselves in life, or, to use a phrase better understood, of making their fortune. They had no oppressions to flee from as their forefathers had, and which forced them to abandon their native land for the inhospitable shore of New England. The new country they sought, although wild and uncivilized, was under their own chosen government; and while they knew they must create homes for themselves by hard, persistent labor, yet they had the consciousness that the government they loved and had assisted to create, would assure them ample protection.

In the settlement of Western New York, therefore, the impelling motive was the inherent passion of our race to improve its condition. This desire, coupled with moral and physical courage, capacity for labor and love of adventure, constitutes what is usually called enterprise; and enterprise let it be called, —the word is significant and comprehensive. The enterprise then of the young and wise men of the East, became directed to Western New York; and its rapid settlement from 1800 to 1812 soon developed its capacity to sustain a nation. The war of 1812, which continued until 1815, checked, for a time, emigration; but the return of peace again saw the long covered wagons, from every part of the older Northern states, winding their way through the miry road, occasionally improved by a primitive corduroy, to the rich lands of the Genesee, which was then a sort of generic name for all the western part of the state.

The bulk of the early emigrants were agriculturists, who sought to find rich land, and create comfortable homes; but

with them was mingled another class, who looked upon the then wilderness with an eye to business. Village sites, water privileges and trading points, soon came to be eagerly sought for and "taken up," as it was termed; and there shopkeepers, artisans and traders soon pitched their tents.

The broad waters of Lake Erie early commanded the attention of these pioneers; and the lands at the foot of the lake could not fail to excite the attention of the sagacious and enterprising. It needed no super-human prescience to determine that the foot of the lake must be an important trading point, but it did need judgment and foresight to determine where the particular site should be for the future city, as well as persistent and indomitable labor to bring into working order the various antagonistic elements which soon began to congregate in this vicinity. As is inevitable in the settlement of a new and promising locality, a considerable portion of these early settlers were adventurers, without any particular business, who came to seek their fortunes without any definite plan; but, in the scramble for position and business which was created, watched and waited "for something to turn up."

Most of these adventurers waited in vain; for, in spite of the opportunities offered, few had the necessary industry, sagacity and persistency, to assume and maintain a solid position. Schemes for fortune-making were innumerable, and failures were the rule, rather than the exception. Steady-minded men kept the even tenor of their way; and, despite the frequent wreck of well laid schemes and the crush of antagonism, the hamlet grew to be a village, and the village expanded into a city.

As the village gradually assumed the form and aspect of civilization, it became necessary to provide for and lay the foundations of those institutions which are inseparable from orderly and Christian communities. The first duty of the settler was to provide a shelter for his family; and, as soon as any considerable number had accomplished this first necessity, then the community thus created began to look for and establish the



ordinances of religion, and make provision for the education of their children. The organization of religious societies, and the establishment of public worship, embraces a wide field of research; and it is a duty which every religious society now existing in the city owes to the community, to gather up and preserve in a compact form a full and connected history of itself. This has been done by the First Presbyterian Church and the First Unitarian Church, and the example should be generally followed. Probably nothing would give a better idea of the character of the population of the city, than a history of the origin and progress of the various religious societies, as they now exist.

The next great subject which would naturally engage the attention of the early settlers, partaking, as they largely did, of the New England element, was the establishment of schools. This, if possible, was more difficult than that of religious worship. Meetings for religious services could and were frequently extemporized in private homes, with such temporary accommodation as could be easily provided; and the services were conducted by lay members, in the absence of a regular minister. Schools, however, could not be so easily improvised. Teachers must be hired for the purpose, and required to be fed, clothed and cared for like other people. If they taught school regularly, it was difficult for them to do anything else; and teachers came here for the reasons that brought others here. Consequently, in those early days few professional teachers came here. It was not uncommon for young men, while preparing themselves for a profession, to help themselves forward by taking charge of a school.

It will easily be seen that this method, or rather absence of method, soon became inadequate for our growing village. Something more definite and tangible became necessary, as our population increased.

The old state law, for the organization and support of common schools, was very crude and imperfect, affording little help and few facilities, apart from local effort. In the absence of

intelligent and public spirited citizens, to originate and push forward a district school, but little was done. Such of the people as had acquired some property and position, preferred to send their children to private schools, such as were to be had, or to send to older settlements, where good schools were established.

For many years, private schools innumerable were started, frequently with great effort and large promise; all of which withered and died, after a brief existence. They were either too expensive for the mass of our population, or failed in other respects to fulfil their promises. The public mind was by no means indifferent to this great subject. It occupied the thoughts of many of our best citizens; but no general and fixed plan could be determined upon, which commanded general approval.

As I before remarked, the state school law for the organization and support of common schools was too imperfect, and the school fund too small, to offer much inducement for local effort.

It was not, however, neglected; and district schools were established under the law, and supported as well as could be expected at that period. As these schools, as far as they went, were public schools, their history comes within the province of this paper.

It will be remembered that, previous to 1832, when the old village of Buffalo was created a city by act of the legislature, the township of Buffalo embraced all the territory since known as Black Rock, and, until about 1830, Tonawanda; and, consequently, the district school organization covered all that territory. The first district was composed of the then village of Buffalo, having the same boundaries as the city, under the charter of 1832; and which remained unchanged, until the consolidation of Black Rock and Buffalo by the charter of 1852.

The village was one district, and No. 1 of the town. The earliest information I have been able to obtain, in regard to the building of a school house, is, that about 1806, permission was



obtained from the Holland Land Company, to occupy the lot on the southwest corner of South Cayuga (now Pearl) and Swan streets, since known as the "Fobes Lot," and opposite the well known residence of Mr. George Coit. It was supposed that the lot was given for school purposes, but no conveyance was ever made. The school house was built, as near as I can ascertain, by private subscription, or, as it was then termed, a "Bee," or contributions of materials and labor by the settlers. Among the names I have heard mentioned as contributors, are those of Samuel Pratt (father of Mrs. Esther Pratt Fox, and grandfather of Samuel F. Pratt), Doctor Cyrenius Chapin, Gamaliel St. John, Joseph Landon and Zenas Barker. It was attended by most of the children of the village, there being for some time no other school. The first teacher was Samuel Whiting, a Presbyterian minister. The next, and best known, was Amos Callender, whose name occurs in nearly every movement connected with morals, education, religion and good order. Mrs. Esther Pratt Fox, Mrs. P. Sidway, Eliza Cotton and Mrs. William Ketchum, are the only pupils of Deacon Callender in that school, known to be residents in the city. Mrs. Sidway informs me that about 1810 or 1811, some of the inhabitants thought something more was wanted for their children, and Gamaliel St. John induced a Mr. Asaph Hall to open what was called a grammar school, in the court house. This was continued for some little time, but could not be sustained permanently.

The old school house, however, has a history. It was burned when the village was destroyed by the British, in 1813-14, but this, although it terminated its existence, did not end its history. After the law for the relief of the Niagara sufferers was passed by Congress, all who had suffered losses, or could create a claim, filed the same with the commissioners. General H. B. Potter was a trustee of the district, and filed a claim in its behalf. The claim was allowed at five hundred dollars, which was paid to General Potter. In the meantime, the district had

been divided, another district having been organized north of Court street, called No. 2. The trustees of this district claimed a share of this money, and commenced a suit for its recovery. Dr. Chapin hearing of it, also claimed that he was entitled to a share, as he was a large contributor to the original building. In this dilemma, which reminds one of the celebrated triangular duel of Midshipman Easy, General Potter could only extricate himself by applying to the Court of Chancery for relief. This was finally obtained, by an order to pay the money into court; which was done, less the costs, and General Potter was relieved. The suits, in the meantime, went on, and were not finally decided until about 1838.

In that year, Mr. Joseph Clary, as the representative of the upper district, paid to me, as superintendent of schools, a bill of costs obtained against his district, in the settlement of the suit. This was all that old district No. 1 (now No. 8) received of the five hundred dollar windfall; the whole of the original amount having been absorbed in costs. District No. 2 had a heavy bill of costs to pay, as did also the estate of Dr. Chapin.

There is some confusion as to the numbers of the districts, after the division was made. Mr. Benjamin Hodge has furnished me with a school district record book, dating back to 1815, in which the territory at and adjacent to Cold Spring is called No. 2. It is so designated till about 1820, after which it appears on the records as No. 3. There are some curious things in this old record book. It is remarkable that any effort at all was made as early as 1815, the year of the termination of the war, to establish a school. Yet it was done, and, after a long struggle, accomplished, and the district was organized in May, 1816. Frederick Miller, William Hodge and Alvin Dodge, were the first trustees. A motion was made to appropriate two hundred silver dollars, for the purchase of a site, and erection of a school house. This was probably made by some rash young man, whose zeal was without knowledge, and the meeting broke up without agreement. Something was done,



however, probably without authority; as, at a special meeting of of the district at the house of William Hodge, a motion was made, "that the trustees go forward at their own expense, and repair the school house, and hire a teacher." This meeting "dissolved without adjournment." In December following, an order was made to buy a lot for sixty dollars, and that the district employ a teacher for another quarter. The teacher's name was S. Fuller. Mr. Benjamin Hodge has furnished me with many interesting facts in regard to this school district, before the war. Mr. Hodge says, that "about 1807, a Scotchman, by the name of Sturgeon, born in Ireland, taught school on Main street, near the present residence of Alanson Robinson. The house had but one window, and that without glass; plenty of light, however, was admitted through the openings between the logs. A small pine table, and three benches made of slabs, constituted the whole furniture. Mr. Sturgeon at first taught only reading, but afterwards at the urgent request of parents, added spelling. Some twenty scholars attended. George Lyon and Benjamin Hodge, two of the older boys, acted as sub-teachers for the older scholars, while Mr. Sturgeon taught the younger children, and did the whipping for the whole school. At that time there were about twelve houses between North street and Granger's creek."

The old record book is a curiosity. The first records afford conclusive evidence of the necessity of a school. The spelling is especially free and easy, without apparent consciousness of any authority. School house is spelt, "scool hous;" meeting is spelt sometimes "meating," and sometimes "meting;" and committee is spelt as Christian people spell "comity."

The most atrocious thing, however, is, that the name of Mr. Seth Steele, occurs several times in the record, is uniformly spelt "Steal." I observe, however, that when dollars and cents occur in the record, they are always spelt correctly.

Mr. George R. Babcock has furnished me with the original copy of a tax, levied in district No. 1, in 1818, by which it

appears that it then embraced the whole village. It is dated Sept. 3d, 1818. The trustees were Heman B. Potter, Reuben B. Heacock and Elias Ransom. There is little doubt that this was the first school tax ever levied in the village. The amount ordered to be raised, was five hundred and fifty-four dollars and twenty-five cents; and the total real and personal property in the whole village is set down at two hundred and seventy-five thousand six hundred and seventy-seven dollars.

After the war, a school was started, and kept in such rooms as could be obtained. Deacon Callender again taught, as did also a Mr. Pease. There was also a school house, built, probably, with the proceeds of the tax referred to. This school house seems to have had no abiding place. Now it was in the Kremlin Block; then on the vacant land now occupied by the Blossom House; again on the ground near the house of S. N. Callender, and still again on Niagara street, near Pearl. While near Mr. Callender's, it was taught by Rev. Deodatus Babcock, an Episcopal minister, who taught some of the higher branches. A lady of the city relates with how much awe she looked upon Mr. Babcock, when he was hearing a recitation in Latin, from Orsamus Marshall. A school was usually kept up, and there was a great variety of teachers. At one time it was kept on the Lancasterian plan, with some success. At one time a vote was obtained for the district, to raise four thousand dollars for a house and lot, but it was afterwards rescinded. About 1830, a tax was levied, with the proceeds of which the trustees bought the lot on Church street, now occupied by school No. 8. Several efforts were made to build a house upon it; but nothing was accomplished until the new system was established. I have heard of quite a number of private school teachers, who taught at sundry times, and with varied success. Among the names I have heard mentioned, as being quite successful, was that of Mr. Wyatt Camp, a brother of Major John G. Camp, who is mentioned with much regard by his pupils.

District No. 2 was organized, as near as I can ascertain, about



1821; and a school was established in hired rooms, in various places. I cannot learn who were the first trustees, or the name of the first teacher. In 1822, a school was kept in a house on the west side of Main street, between Mohawk and Genesee streets. Our fellow citizen, Mr. Fillmore, commenced his career as a public man, as teacher of this school. He was, at the same time, a student with the law firm of Rice & Clary. I will here take occasion to state, that Mr. Fillmore afterwards taught the school at Cold Spring for one winter, 1822-3. During that time he was also a deputy postmaster, and came in after school in the afternoon, to make up the mails. When the stage left for Albany in the morning, his practice was to ride out on the box, with the driver, to open his school at Cold Spring at the usual hour.

I will also, while I am about it, state that another of our fellow citizens, Mr. Henry Lovejoy, also taught the school at Cold Spring for one winter. Whether he kept the school better or worse than Mr. Fillmore, I am not able to state. I have no doubt, however, that it was kept "well enough for all practical purposes."

District No. 2, through its trustee, Mr. Moses Baker, took up the lot on the corner of Pearl and Mohawk streets for a school lot. A building was built on the lot, for the joint use of the district and the Society of Universalists. The school was kept in the lower story, and the Society occupied the upper story. Mr. Peter E. Miles was the first teacher in this school. He will be remembered by many of our old citizens, as a man of many amiable traits of character, and had the reputation, at the time, of being the best mathematician in the city. He died in 1832. The school house was occupied until about 1833, when it was abandoned; and the brick school on the Franklin street alley was erected, to which I shall refer hereafter.

When the city organization of schools took effect, in 1838, there were six district school houses in the city, where schools were kept, as follows:

No. 2, Franklin street (alley.)

No. 12, Hydraulics.

No. 15, Perry street.

No. 16, Goodell street.

No. 17, South Division street.

No. 19, Louisiana street.

The numbers were under the old town organization.

District No. 12 was organized in 1830. The first trustees were John Colman, James Bennett and N. H. Gardner. The first school was taught by a female teacher, and did not exceed thirty scholars. In 1832, a Mr. Emory was appointed teacher, being the first male teacher in the district. A small school house was built on the corner of Pollard (now Jefferson) and Folsom streets, where the school was kept until the new school house on Seneca street was built, in 1839. Mr. N. H. Gardner was a standing trustee of this district, and has favored me with a valuable statement of the early history and progress of the school, in the prosperity of which he has always taken a deep interest.

No. 15 was organized in 1831. A very eligible lot on Perry street was presented to the district, by the late Dr. B. Burwell and Dr. J. W. Clarke; on which a quite large, two-story school house was erected, in 1832. The first trustees were Joel S. Smith, A. C. Moore and William Harris. The first teacher was Henry Griswold. The school was kept in this building, as No. 3 of the new system, until the new building on the same street was erected, in 1851.

I find it difficult to obtain any authentic information in regard to No. 16. It was probably organized about the same time as No. 15. The little brick school house on the corner of Goodell and Washington streets, is supposed to have been built in 1832. I found it in 1838, crowded with scholars, in charge of Mr. D. Galusha, but destitute of any of the conveniences belonging to a school. The manner in which the business of the district was conducted, was a fair sample of the management



of school affairs in the olden time. Deacon Jabez Goodell was the trustee, and the only one I ever knew. A large portion of the district was his own estate, and he managed all its affairs. The school was kept four months in the winter, strictly according to law. The teacher was hired in the fall, at the lowest market price, to teach four months. The deacon had a tenement to rent, and provisions from his farm to sell the teacher at fair market rates. When the term was up, he was regularly settled with, and the school house closed till the next season; when the same formula was gone through. The public money was drawn in May, and held by the deacon. There is no dispute that this money was safely kept, and, in the end, properly accounted for; but when the new system came into operation, and the money was called for, to be disbursed according to the new law, and through the hands of other parties, it appeared to grievously interfere with the old gentleman's methodical habits. The school was continued in the little old school house until 1845, when it was removed to the present building on Oak street.

District No. 17 was also organized about the same time, and a very eligible lot was obtained on South Division street, which now forms part of the lot where school No. 7 now stands. A select school had been previously kept in the district, in a building erected by private subscriptions, situated on what was then called Tan alley, now Carroll street. This school was taught by John Drew, a teacher well known in those days. The name of Tan alley, is generally supposed to have originated from the fact that it was the road leading to the old tannery of Joseph D. Hoyt; but if any future antiquary should investigate that question, I think it well for him to inquire whether it might not possibly originate from a way which John Drew had of tanning the hides of his unruly scholars.

The trustees of the district when I first knew it, were, William Ketchum, Manning Case and Orlando Allen. Old Mr. Case, of the Farmers' Hotel, went to Batavia in person, and obtained a deed of the school lot. The building was erected in

1834 or 1835, and was the best built house then in the city, for school purposes. It was used until 1845, when the present school house was built.

District No. 19 was organized about 1834, and in 1835 the well known red school house was built on Louisiana street, on a lot given the district by Dr. J. W. Clark. The first trustees were, John R. Prince, Charles S. Pierce and William J. Mack. The first teacher was Stephen Carner. The school house was carried away by a flood, I think in the year it was built; but was replaced firmly by Charles S. Pierce, upon a timber frame work bedded four or five feet in the ground. This served the inhabitants for a school, a church, public meetings and meetings of a general social character. The school was continued in it until the erection of the present large, well arranged building, for school No. 4; but the old school house still stands upon the old lot.

I am under obligations to Benjamin Hodge, N. H. Gardner, A. C. Moore and Dr. J. W. Clark, for valuable letters, which I shall file among the papers of this Society. Such of our citizens now living, who resided here previous to the year 1837, a year memorable in the financial history of the city, will easily call to mind the numerous institutions on a large scale, which started into being, and, after a short and sometimes brilliant career, sunk into oblivion. The high-school association, started in 1827, was one of the most promising; liberal subscriptions were made, and a fine building erected (now forming part of the Hospital of the Sisters of Charity); and for some years it was apparently successful. But it had no solid foundation or inherent strength, and soon faded away. It was revived as a military school on the system of Captain Partridge; and for some years was successful, and was the great pet of the city. It was, however, too expensive for the time, failing to reach the great body of our people; and changes of teachers and policy soon brought its career to a close.

All will remember the great University projected in 1835,



which was to rival Harvard and Yale when it was built, but which never arose. The Medical Department, however, did acquire a foothold, and is now the Medical College of this city.

Repeated efforts were made to establish Female Seminaries, several of which were well organized and conducted; but all failed to meet the wants of a city, which, although becoming populous and prosperous, yet embraced a large proportion of those who could not avail themselves of these expensive institutions.

Such was the condition of education in 1837. The great financial revolution which then swept over the country, fell heavily upon the city. The great prosperity which prevailed for several years, had excited a wild spirit of speculation, which, culminating in 1836, brought upon us the disasters of 1837, under which so many of our best and most substantial citizens were overwhelmed. The recent similar revulsion of 1857, will give some idea of that of 1837, when the population was less than twenty thousand. In the state of things thus produced, the private schools of the city were so paralyzed as to be of little service; and thoughtful men began to cast around for some general and effective system, which would bring the means of education within the reach of all. The subject was much discussed in the winter of 1836-7, both in the public prints and in private circles. In that winter a law was passed, authorizing the appointment of a city superintendent of common schools. Under that law, Mr. R. W. Haskins received the appointment. The law was, however, so imperfect, that no good effects followed its enactment. Mr. Haskins found himself an official without power; and, after vainly endeavoring to accomplish something under the law, resigned his office within the year. With his resignation, Mr. Haskins sent a communication to the council, stating his inability to accomplish anything without important amendments to the law, and suggested some general ideas for such amendments, which were afterwards incorporated in the law.

The state law was not adapted to a large city. Few people took any interest in the district schools, and few children, except those of the poorer classes, attended them. The trustees under the law, were men of business, who had no time to spare, and no means to improve their several schools. They therefore got along as easily as possible, and as well, perhaps, as could be expected. It soon became the custom of the trustees, to find some person who would take the school for the smallest rate of tuition, during the time required by law, to enable them to draw public money; giving them the public money and taking their own risk of collection from the pupils. This easy and slipshod way of doing business produced such results as might be expected. In some populous districts the teacher could do very well, and would sustain a very fair school. In others, it would be kept a few months to fulfill the requirements of the law, and then closed for the remainder of the year. The whole system was without supervision or accountability, except such as was barely sufficient to comply with the state law.

Such was the condition of the common schools in 1837. The general failure of the private schools, and the financial condition of the city, conspired to draw attention to the skeleton of common schools then existing, and to induce an effort to revive and improve it, so as to command general confidence.

Upon the resignation of Mr. Haskins, Mr. N. P. Sprague was appointed; who declined for the same reasons given by Mr. Haskins. At the next meeting of the council, I was appointed superintendent without previous consultation. I was induced to accept the office at the earnest solicitation of Judge Hall, then chairman of the committee on schools, who, with other members of the council, expressed a strong desire that the common school law should be amended, or a new one framed, so that it would meet the public wants.

I must ask the indulgence of the Society, if, in the course of this paper, I may be guilty of egotism. But the position in which I found myself unexpectedly placed, and the immediate



responsibility I was obliged to assume, together with the executive duties I was called upon to perform, caused me to become so identified with the system then established, that I trust I may be excused if I make too frequent use of the first person.

My first duty was to ascertain where the schools were situated, the boundaries of the districts, and the condition of the schools. The first object was accomplished, after a few day's exploration with a horse and buggy, and after innumerable inquiries. The next point, to wit, the boundaries, was one of more difficulty. The city was nominally divided into school districts, and had a board of trustees and a clerk. I did not find a single trustee who could give me the boundaries of his own district, and but one clerk who had a record book showing the same. This clerk was Mr. Aaron Bean, who taught in the school district No. 2, in the alley in the rear of Franklin street, between Huron and Mohawk. Our old citizens will remember this excellent and methodical man, who taught the school so long, and gave all the talent with which nature had endowed him, so faithfully and conscientiously. I shall never forget the surprise and almost bewilderment of the old gentleman, when I first called upon him, in my official capacity. If I remember right, he said it was the first call he had received from an official, since the school house was built, some four or five years before. He had kept the school, kept the record, made his returns to the trustees, received the public money, collected the tuition allowed, two dollars per quarter, took the whole care of the house, and was, consequently, the man of the district. The record of the boundaries of the district was the first I obtained correctly, which was marked upon a map of the city; and as fast as I found another line, it was marked upon this map. In this way I obtained a tolerable map of the districts. A curious document it was, now, unfortunately, lost. A portion of the city was in no district at all, and several lines overlapped each other, making inextricable confusion in boundary lines and questions of jurisdiction. With much difficulty, I obtained the necessary data to make a

report to the council, which, with the map, was referred to the committee on schools and superintendent, with power to prepare a plan of organization. The duty of preparing the law for the organization of the system, devolved upon Judge Hall and myself; and I well remember going to his house by appointment amidst a furious snow storm, which continued the whole day, and during which the original school law of our city was prepared. It was in the midst of the Patriot war, and the public mind was highly excited with the stirring events then occurring in this vicinity. It was to this that we were undoubtedly indebted for the absence of opposition before the legislature, to a law which changed so completely our whole system of public instruction. Yet we did not venture to propose an entire free school system, and, for the purpose of avoiding all issues with districts, the form of local organization was retained, and a low rate of tuition established. A slight amendment to the law, in 1839, made the schools free, with the control of the whole in the hands of the council and superintendent. The reorganization of school districts was made in 1838, and has not been essentially changed.

The summer of 1838 was a memorable one in the history of our public schools. The subject was the most prominent one then before the public, and was agitated with much spirit. Public meetings were held, which were largely attended, and the subject fully discussed. The most important series of meetings were commenced on the thirty-first of August, at the old court house. The late Hon. Albert H. Tracy presided, and Mr. Horatio H. Shumway acted as secretary. A committee of four from each ward was appointed, "To inquire into the condition of the schools in Buffalo, both public and private; ascertain the number of children who attend school, the expense of their education, and report the same, together with some plan for the improvement of our school, at a future meeting to be called for that purpose."

This committee consisted of the following persons, all well



known to our older citizens, many of whom are now living among us:

First Ward.—D. J. Trowbridge, Charles S. Pierce, F. W. Atkins, A. C. Moore, J. R. Prince.

Second Ward.—J. W. Beals, S. S. Case, Lucius Storrs, James I. Brown and N. H. Gardner.

Third Ward.—Henry Root, Moses Bristol, S. N. Callender, H. Shumway and L. G. Marvin.

Fourth Ward.—O. G. Steele, Nathan Lyman, N. Wilgus, Moses Baker and D. Galusha.

Fifth Ward.—N. K. Hall, N. Vosburgh, S. Chamberlain, Joseph Miller and S. Caldwell.

The committee set to work immediately; and, on the nineteenth of September following, at a meeting held at the common council chamber, made a full and very interesting report; showing the condition of education, public and private, with the cost of the same. The report represented the schools as in a low state, and utterly unequal to the public wants. Among other details, it was shown that more than half of the children of the city did not attend any school at all.

The committee also reported a plan for a full and complete organization of the city, under an entire free school system, under the authority and control of the common council; the expense over and above the money obtained from the state school fund, to be defrayed by the general tax upon the real and personal property of the city. The plan of organization proposed by the committee, embraced “a Primary school in each district, a Ward school in each ward for more advanced scholars, and a Central High school where all the higher branches necessary for a complete English education shall be taught.”

The report was accepted, and a resolution offered that it should be adopted. A long and animated discussion took place, pending which the meeting adjourned two weeks, to meet again at the old court house. The report of the committee was taken up at the adjourned meeting, and after a long

debate, adopted and transmitted to the common council. It was well received, and the following winter the schools were made free by act of the legislature. The plan recommended by the committee, although varied in its details, was substantially adopted, and now forms the basis of our system. The modifications consisted in making the district schools larger than was contemplated by the report, and dividing them into departments, thus obviating the necessity of ward schools. The higher Central school was also, after many years delay, finally adopted, and now forms part of our general free school system.

It is due to the memory of the Hon. Albert H. Tracy, to state, that he presided at all these meetings and gave the weight of his great influence in favor of the system proposed by the report. Horatio Shumway acted at every meeting as secretary, and was also very earnest and decided in his approval of the adoption of an entire free school system. I would state, also, that in making up the report and plan of organization, the committee had no precedents, but struck out the plan from their own judgment of the wants of the city, and the most direct and effective method of accomplishing that object.

The labor of organizing and bringing into working order a new system of public schools, like that of our own, can scarcely be conceived by one without experience in matters of that kind. While the public mind was well prepared for a reformation of the whole system, there were not a few excellent men and true friends of education, who doubted the expediency of the proposed radical change, and feared that too much was being attempted for the times.

There was also another class of men, who had acquired property by hard labor, and had already reared their own families and educated their children at their own expense, who believed themselves unjustly oppressed by the new system. We were apt, at that time, when in the early flush of the new system, to apply to this latter class the term "Old Fogies," and similar



disrespectful epithets. I will not assume to say that they were not well deserved in some instances, but that some of these gentlemen had what seemed to them good ground for their objection, I can now easily see. It was a new and unprecedented burden put upon them, after they had passed the meridian of life, and had educated their own families; yet I still think they were mistaken in their general views, and that every property-holder and citizen receives abundant remuneration for all taxes he may pay for free schools. I can well understand that the objections they made were entitled to more weight than we were then willing to concede.

The carrying out of the new system also aroused frequent issues with the inhabitants of the several districts. The teacher was apt to be deemed an employee of the district; and in the occasional *emeutes* which occur in all districts, the people thought they had a right to discharge or appoint a teacher at pleasure.

Every mother whose child had been punished at school for "doing nothing," according to the victim's account, called upon the superintendent, in high wrath, to have the teacher dismissed.

The taxation for the erection of school houses was sometimes burdensome and unequal; and all issues of that kind were referred to the superintendent, who could only fall back upon the law, and defend against all comers, as best he might.

The selection of a site, and the building of the house, were also subjects which rarely satisfied everybody, and in which every resident of the district claimed the right to be heard. Principles were to be established, and precedents made for a new and untried system, upon which many estimable men differed widely in opinion.

Taking all these things into consideration, the office of superintendent of schools, during the organization of the system and the building of the first set of school houses, was one of the most difficult and responsible of the offices under the city government.

The first school house built under the new system, was that in No. 8 on Church street. This was the old original district which once embraced the whole village. The lot where the school house now stands was owned by the district; having been bought with the proceeds of a tax raised several years before. The inhabitants, however, had never been able to agree upon the building of a house upon the lot. It was determined to build a house in this district, and a tax was levied for that purpose. It was the wealthiest district in the city, and, although the tax was heavy for a school tax, yet it was light upon the district. It was built in the form which it retains, a handsome, well proportioned building, but on a scale which at that time was thought too extravagant. It formed a subject of sharp controversy, and the papers of the day abounded with severe criticisms upon its magnitude and extravagance. This building, although it has since been enlarged to the full capacity of the lot, is now the smallest public school building in the city. The school was a great success. The first teachers were well qualified; the accommodations superior to any school building in the city; and it was soon filled with scholars from every class in the community. I remember well, that the president of this Society, after his return from Congress in 1839, placed his children in this school.

The year 1839 constituted quite an era in the building of school houses. A plan was adopted, on a more moderate scale than in No. 8, but of larger dimensions. Houses were built in No. 11, on Vine street (since taken for the use of the Colored school); in No. 6 on South Division street, now standing, but greatly enlarged; No. 13, on Washington street, on ground now occupied by the Washington Market; No. 5 on Seneca street (Hydraulics), still standing, but much enlarged; No. 12 on Spruce street, a one-story building, now used for a Primary school, a school house of the largest size having since been built in the district.

The taxation necessary to construct all these buildings and



pay for the lots, embraced a large portion of the city; and being, as I before remarked, a new and unusual tax, bore heavily in many instances, and caused considerable dissatisfaction. It is, therefore, not surprising that a reaction took place in the public mind, in regard to public schools. I do not say there was any general dissatisfaction with the system, but the heavy taxation had its usual effect, and it was feared that even the best of things might be too expensive, and we were going ahead a little too fast. The city was suffering under the effects of the great revulsion of 1837, business was stagnant, real estate greatly depressed, and the prospect for the future far from flattering.

It is still less surprising, that the individual who was supposed to be the chief agitator of these movements, and who certainly was the executive officer in all these proceedings, should have been singled out for sacrifice to these reactionary influences. The superintendent was then appointed by the common council, and, in the following spring of 1840, his name was left off the slate for reappointment. He was, to use the expression of modern politics, "left out in the cold." My successor was Mr. Daniel Bowen, an estimable citizen, sincerely friendly to the school system, but having no experience in the duties of the office. He was appointed contrary to his wishes, and being unable to give it proper attention, resigned in a few months. I would say here, that, subsequently, Mr. Bowen, as a member of the council and again as superintendent of schools, proved himself an efficient officer, and has at all times given his efforts and influence in favor of free education.

Mr. Silas Kingsley was appointed to fill the vacancy occasioned by Mr. Bowen's resignation, and was also reappointed by the council of 1841. It is scarcely necessary to say, that Mr. Kingsley was eminently fitted for the office. He was a teacher of large experience and marked success, and brought to the duties of the office a sincere devotion to its interests, and an excellent faculty for organizing and disciplining the interior of a school. Under his administration the schools were

greatly improved, in their classification as well as in the course of study adopted.

Mr. S. Caldwell held the office in 1842 and 1843, and Mr. E. S. Hawley in 1844. During these years the schools continued to increase largely in usefulness and general popularity, and the system became thoroughly established in the public mind. All the schools were filled to overflowing, and the necessity of providing additional accommodations became imperative.

In 1845, I was again appointed superintendent. No new school house had been erected since 1839, and this onerous duty again devolved upon me. In that year, a large school house was built in district No. 3, on Erie street. This building was destroyed by fire in 1852, the lot sold, and the large and beautiful building on the Terrace, near Genesee street, was erected in 1853.

School house in No. 7, on South Division street, now standing, was the first building in the city calculated to accommodate three departments.

School house in No. 15, on Oak street, north of Goodell, now standing, has since been much enlarged, and a new building for the Primary department erected, within the same enclosure.

The school house and lot in district No. 1, on Seventh street, north of Carolina, has been sold, and a building of the largest class erected on the same street, north of Virginia street.

The year of 1845 closed my connection with the public schools, as I supposed, finally, and it is well at this point to take a short retrospective view of the progress of the school system. In the winter of 1837-8, when I took charge of the schools, the number of district schools in the city was seven, all with small, ill-constructed buildings, without any of the conveniences which are now thought to be indispensable.

The total registration in all these schools, the first week of 1839, was one hundred and seventy-nine. In 1838, the school building in No. 8 was built, but not finished for the opening of 1839. The good effects of the law of 1838 upon the schools,



was manifested in the increased attendance, although no new ones were established in that year. The registration in the same schools the first week of 1839, was four hundred and thirty-one. In 1839, five new school houses were erected, and five new schools organized. The registration the first week of 1840, was one thousand two hundred and fifty-two, about seven times the number entered but two years before. In the school No. 8, two hundred and forty-six scholars were registered, being nearly fifty per cent. more than the total registration two years before. This result, with the new energy which had been infused into the department, established firmly in the public mind the policy of the free school system. The schools had become superior to all others in the city, and several of the most successful of the private school teachers abandoned their schools and took positions in the public schools.

In February, 1846, before my term of office expired, a third department was established in district No. 7, for the purpose of providing a higher grade of instruction for the scholars in the public schools, being in effect a Central High school. It was continued in this form until 1852, when the present High school was purchased, and the institution established on its present basis. The progress of the school system has since been onward. In all the vicissitudes of business, the whirl of politics, the occasional unwise attempts of ultra religionists and politicians to give them a direction favorable to their peculiar views, they have been kept singularly free from all influences, which would divert them from the single purpose for which they were established, which was to provide a good common school education for all the children of the city, at the public expense.

In 1846, the large commodious school building in No. 14, on Franklin street, was erected, and almost immediately filled with scholars.

In 1847, the school house in district No. 10, on Delaware street, was built; and in the fall of that year, the school was

removed from the alley where it had been kept so many years. Before this was done, districts Nos. 9 and 10 had been united by order of the council.

In 1848, the council purchased the school house and lot on Vine street, for the use of the Colored school, and organized it on the same plan as the other schools. A new school house was built for district No. 11, on Elm street, north of Eagle, which is still used.

In 1849, a large and very well arranged building was erected in district No. 4, on Elk street, upon a spacious lot, where the school is still kept. Also, the large school house on Spruce street, in district No. 12, nearly opposite the house built in 1839.

In 1850, a new school house was erected on Perry street, in district No. 3, of the same class as that in No. 4, and the old inconvenient school house built under the old law, was finally abandoned in the summer of 1851.

In 1851, evening schools were established by order of the council, and were continued for several winters with great success. They were abandoned for no other reason that I am aware of, but to save expense, and I trust the time will soon come, if it has not already, when they will again be organized. The school building on Erie street, in district No. 2, was destroyed in the great fire of September, 1851. The next year, the large, beautiful and well appointed building now standing on the Terrace near Genesee street was erected. This was the last school house built by the city under the old charter.

In 1852, a city convention was held, for the purpose of preparing a new charter for the city, which became a law in April, 1853, and took effect January 1st, 1854. By this law, the town of Black Rock was annexed to the city of Buffalo, and a new organization of the city government effected. The schools were reorganized with the other departments, and the office of superintendent made elective. The free school system was extended over the new territory, and its duties and responsibilities greatly enlarged.



This paper has grown upon my hands much more than I expected, and I shall not attempt to proceed farther. I leave it to others to keep up the record of the free schools. By the present system, and indeed for many years past, the several superintendents have published elaborate annual reports, which form part of our city public documents, and contain in detail every item of information, relative to the progress and condition of our free school system.

I prepose, briefly, to make some comparisons between the schools in 1838, 1845 and 1852; each embracing a period of seven years. In 1838, the number of scholars enrolled in the first week of the year, was one hundred and seventy-nine; in 1845, three thousand nine hundred and seven; and, in 1852, five thousand eight hundred and forty-eight. In 1838, there were seven schools, each with one department and one teacher. In 1845, there were fifteen schools, each organized with two departments, employing fifteen male and thirty-seven female teachers, fifty-two in all. In 1852, there were seventeen male, and nineteen principal female teachers, and fifty-eight female assistants, making ninety-four in all.

The expense of teachers' wages, including the state money, was:

In 1838,.....	\$ 7,839 83.
In 1845,.....	11,771 50.
In 1852,.....	27,178 89.

This last seemed a heavy and burdensome tax for free schools, yet the constantly increasing attendance, and general popularity of the schools, has caused a constant increase of expense; and in 1857-8, the amount paid for teachers' wages, reached nearly ninety thousand dollars, while the total valuation of school property, paid for by local taxation, amounted to about three hundred thousand dollars; being greater than the total valuation of the real and personal property of the whole village in 1818.

I have thus given a rapid and perhaps desultory history of

the district and public schools of the old village and present city, up to the year 1852. It is, necessarily, imperfect in the earlier details. The records are not to be found, and much of the information obtained is traditional. From many of our old residents, I have obtained valuable information, but, in the lapse of time, memory is not always reliable in regard to dates or localities. The purpose of this paper is mainly historical, and it is not necessary to discuss the merits of our school system, or of education generally. In its organization and progress to the present time, errors have undoubtedly been committed; and, at times, the burden of taxation has borne heavily upon our people, but it has been met with cheerfulness, and when it has borne the hardest, seemingly too heavy for our resources, not a voice has been raised to destroy or materially change the system itself. A moderate reduction of current expenses has always satisfied the public mind.

No city has attained a higher position as a supporter of free schools, than our own. In my annual report for 1845, I took occasion to make the following statement:

“ I think I am not mistaken in claiming for the city of Buffalo the honor of being the first city in the state to establish free schools, the support of which is based upon taxation upon the property of the city, and the control and direction of which forms part of the municipal government. Free schools, it is true, have been in existence in the city of New York for a long period, but they have been supported by private benevolence, rendered through the medium of the Public School Society, which was established under the auspices of DeWitt Clinton, when mayor of the city, in 1805. All the free schools were under the control of this society until the passage of the new school law of 1842. When the New York state common school system was established, this society was recognized by law as the disbursing agent of the state school money for the city of New York. But no city, before our own, recognized the broad principle of universal education, based upon the property of the city, and forming part of its organic law, although several others have since followed our example.”

It remains for us to keep up the reputation of our city. Our schools are successfully established; the expenditures for public



buildings, &c., are made to an extent which will require little further expenditure for many years. Our teachers are men and women who have adopted the calling as a profession, and who cannot be excelled in any of the requisites for teachers of the young. The schools should be conducted with a steady and reliable policy, affording to the children of the city ample means for obtaining a sufficient English education; but should not be forced beyond what will fully meet this end. Let the public sustain the schools in every reasonable requirement, and they will certainly justify the confidence placed in them. But should the public fail in its duty in this respect, retrogression will assuredly follow. It is education that makes us what we are, and let it be our first duty to make that education such as will develop to their highest capabilities the faculties which have been bestowed upon us by the great Author of our being.

# THE FIRST SCHOOL HOUSE IN BUFFALO.

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BY CHRISFIELD JOHNSON.\*

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THE reminiscences, whether written or verbal, of those who were residents of Buffalo before the war of 1812, contain frequent mention of the "little red school house," which stood on the northwest corner of Cayuga (now Pearl) and Swan streets, and which was burned with the rest of the village, in December, 1813. Though schools were taught, temporarily, in other buildings, this was, as far as can be learned, the only actual school house, the only temple dedicated exclusively to education in Buffalo, before the war.

Its history is interesting, not only on account of its being the first building of its kind in what is now a great city, but because it became the subject of a somewhat famous controversy in the courts, which was not terminated till twenty-five years after the structure itself had ceased to exist. A succinct account of that contest is given by Oliver G. Steele, Esq., in a paper read by him before the Buffalo Historical Society, in the year 1863.†

The time and manner of building the structure in question, as well as the names of contributors thereto, have heretofore been a matter of doubtful tradition. As early as 1801, the few citizens then residing in Buffalo, began to manifest a desire for a school; and, on the eleventh day of August, in that year, Mr.

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\* From the *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*, November 6th, 1875.

† See *The Buffalo Common Schools*, p. 410.



Joseph R. Palmer, brother of John Palmer, the first tavern-keeper in Buffalo, wrote to Joseph Ellicott, the Holland Company's agent at Batavia, requesting, on the part of the inhabitants, the privilege of raising a school house on some lot in the village which was not yet surveyed for sale. Mr. Palmer states, that the New York Missionary Society will furnish a teacher, clear of all expense, except board, and that the people "have the timber ready to hew out."

This request was at once acceded to by Mr. Ellicott, whose journal shows the following entry, dated August 14th, 1801:

"Went to Buffalo, alias New Amsterdam, to lay off a lot for a school house, the inhabitants offering to erect one at their own expense."

From this, Mr. Ketchum, in his *History of Buffalo and the Senecas*, infers, that the house was probably built in 1802 or 1803, by subscription. Mr. Steele, in the essay above referred to, judging from verbal information, fixes the time of erection at about 1806, and adds:

"The school house, as near as I can ascertain, was built by private subscription, or, as it was then termed, a "Bee," or contribution of labor and materials by the settlers. Among the names I have mentioned as contributors, are those of Samuel Pratt (father of Mrs. Esther Pratt Fox, and grandfather of Samuel F. Pratt), Doctor Cyrenius Chapin, Gamaliel St. John, Joseph Landon and Zenas Barker."

Those who feel an interest in the early history of Buffalo, will be gratified to learn, that there is now in existence, among the miscellaneous papers of the Historical Society, a document giving an authentic account of the beginning of school house building in the city of Buffalo. This is nothing less than the original account-book, containing the subscriptions and payments toward building the "little red school house," of historic fame.

It is only a memorandum-book of coarse paper, with probably the roughest brown pasteboard cover ever seen on a book; yet it is extremely interesting, not only as giving an authentic account of the erection of the first school house in the city, and as showing the names of a large proportion of the inhabitants

of the then infant village, but also because it is one of the very few documents relating to local history which survived the burning of the village in 1813. With the solitary exception of the town-book of the town of Erie from 1805 to 1808, the account-book is the most valuable article to the student of local history in the whole collection of the Buffalo Historical Society. The following is a literal copy of the first page:

“ At a meeting of the Inhabitanse of the Vilage of Buffaloe meet on the twenty-ninth day of March Eighteen hundred & seven at Joseph Landon's Inn by a Vote of Sd meeting Zenas Barker in the Chair for the purpos to arect a School Hous in Sd Village by a Subscription of the Inhabitanse.

“also Voted that Samuel Pratt, Joseph Landon & Joshua Gillett be a Committee to See that they are appropriated on the School House above mentiond which Subscriptions are to be paid in by the first day of June next or Such *part of it* as Shall be wanted by that time.”

And the following is a list of the subscribers, and the amount subscribed by each:

Salvanus Mabee.....	\$ 20.00
Zenas Barker.....	10.00
Thomas Fourth.....	3.00
Joshua Gillett.....	15.00
Joseph Wells.....	7.00
John Johnson.....	10.00
Nathaniel W. Sever.....	10.00
Isaac H. Bennett.....	3.00
Levi Strong.....	5.00
William Hull.....	10.00
Samuel Pratt.....	22.00
Richard Mann.....	5.00
Isabel Adkins.....	5.00
Samuel Andrews.....	1.00
Garret Freeland.....	1.00
Billa Sherman.....	.87½

All the subscriptions were dated March 30th, 1807, the day after the meeting. Each man's name was placed on a page of the book and charged with the amount subscribed, and then credited with the amount paid, either by cash, labor or material.

The carpenter work appears to have been all done by Levi Strong and George Kith, whose accounts are also in the book. Their bills for work amounted to sixty-eight dollars and fifty cents. The credits for work and material were mostly in April, 1807, showing that the building was started immediately after the subscription.



From the fact that Joshua Gillett is credited with two and a quarter gallons of whisky on the thirteenth of April, I should presume that "raising" took place on that day. But the funds or credit must have been low, and Buffalo must have remained without a school house for a year and a half more; for it was not until the tenth of November, 1808, eight months after Buffalo had become the county seat of Niagara county, that the shingles were procured for the school house, when two thousand were furnished by Samuel Pratt.

The building was doubtless finished up for use that winter (1808-9), for, on the twenty-third day of May, 1809, there was a general setting up, and the last entries of small cash payments are made in the book.

Most of the subscribers, including Pratt, Mabee, Landon, Barker, Gillett, and Wells, paid up in full, but some appear to have failed in part, and a few entirely.

The book was presented to the Historical Society in 1866, by Joshua Gillet, of Wyoming county, whom I presume to have been a son of the Joshua Gillet who was one of the committee to raise funds and superintend the building. It was probably lying in a trunk, in 1813, and was carried out of town, and thus escaped the destruction which involved so many documents of that era.

The queerest part of the whole matter is, that Doctor Chapin, who carried on a suit for over fifteen years, on the ground that he was one of the chief proprietors, doesn't appear as a subscriber at all. Perhaps there may be some explanation of this circumstance, but the accounts seem to be very full and minute.

The total amount of subscription paid, was one hundred and one dollars. The commissioners allowed five hundred dollars to pay for it!

Such is the authentic history of the building of the "little red school house," the only one in Buffalo before the war of 1812.













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